



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

**ANALYSIS OF THE USMC FITREP:  
CONTEMPORARY OR INFLEXIBLE?**

by

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**AN ANALYSIS OF THE USMC FITREP:  
CONTEMPORARY OR INFLEXIBLE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this thesis is threefold. Firstly, to attempt to provide validity for the two-sided matching process; secondly, analyze FITREP attributes to determine their suitability for a weighted criteria evaluation system and; thirdly, compare the USMC promotion and assignment process with contemporary human resource management practices. Using data from the USMC Officer Accession Career file (MCCOAC), a logit model is used to estimate the effects of TBS preference and other officer characteristics on retention to the seven year mark. Findings indicate that there was little difference in the probability of retention throughout most preference levels except for the bottom sixth. Using USMC FITREP data, an ordinary least squares model is used to estimate the effects of rank and MOS on FITREP scores across all attributes. Multiple comparison tests demonstrated that there are statistical differences at the 0.05 level between the means of the MOSs. Additionally, reporting creep is continuing across all attributes.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. BACKGROUND

Every year some five to six thousand United States Marine Corps (USMC) officers are allocated to new jobs within the corps. The assignment of these officers is both a time-consuming, expensive, and somewhat subjective process. In 2001, Major Paul Robards (Royal Australian Engineers) completed a thesis titled, “Applying Two-Sided Matching Processes to the United States Navy Enlisted Assignment Process” (Robards, 2001). Robards notes that assignment processes “seek to place the right person in the right job at the right time” (2001, 1). In describing one-to-one matching models, Robards introduces the concept of matching agents. He states, “definitions of acceptable and non-acceptable partners [in the two-sided matching process] are important for defining stability” (2001, 6). “The definition of acceptable and non-acceptable agents is the same as that given for one-to-one matching markets” (Robards, 2001, 11). Similarly, it may be argued that particular jobs have a set of performance criteria that may be matched to a member’s strongest performance areas resulting in an overall improved performance on the job. Any decision support system that attempts to optimize these matches would be expected to improve individual job satisfaction and organizational productivity.

Robards defers to a study by Irving et al (1987) that proposes an “algorithm that maximizes the average satisfaction of all people involved in the process.” Although this algorithm is based upon the marriage relationship: the same theory applies. “Satisfaction is measured by the position of each person’s assigned partner [matching job criteria] in his or her preference list” (Robards, 2001, 7).

If an officer’s strongest performance criteria are identified as strong predictors of performance in a particular job position, then we can reasonably expect that if we are able to match those two criteria we can optimize performance in the specific job. Robards states, “furthermore, the idea of a weighted preference list” (2001, 7) could be introduced in order to “maximize satisfaction.”

Major Robards is half-way through a two year program developing a two-sided matching, multi-criteria, decision support system for personnel assignment. His decision support system is being developed around three criteria:

**Job Description.** Robards notes that “the foremost considerations when assigning a person to a vacancy are their rate and rating” (2001, 27). For this reason the first criteria is the job description which includes such information as rank, sex, category and other job-related information.

**Job Development.** Robards notes in his thesis that each position has a job description that will include the “list of skills or a training level” that a member should have completed (2001, 33). Therefore, the second criterion includes details of training development requirements for the member.

**Cost Optimization.** Moving personnel from one job to another costs money. Although not covered in detail in his thesis, Robards includes this element as the third criteria for his decision support system.

Robards also introduces a “utility table” that weights selection criteria for a given position according to “importance” (2001, 34). “These importance factors indicate the relative importance that the particular command attaches to the various criteria” (Robards, 2001, 34). Such a system of weighting selection criteria may also be applied to performance criteria in determining the best match for a particular job. The following figures provide a simple example of how performance criteria may be weighted in order to select a suitable officer for promotion and/or assignment. The following example uses three ‘attributes’ from the USMC FITREP: (1) Mission Performance, (2) Leading Subordinates and, (3) Communication. We will assume that these are three core competencies for selection in the infantry MOS. Each of these competencies is weighted on a scale of one through ten according to their ability to predict performance success in the infantry MOS.

The steps are as follows:

1. Conduct workplace assessment to determine weighting of competence.

Core Competences	Mission Performance			Leading Subordinates			Communication			Total	Selection Priority
	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score		
CAPT Bloggs		9			8			6			
CAPT Smart		9			8			6			
CAPT Shifty		9			8			6			

2. Assign FITREP scores for each officer across competences.

Core Competences	Mission Performance			Leading Subordinates			Communication			Total	Selection Priority
	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score		
CAPT Bloggs	5	9		4	8		4	6			
CAPT Smart	4	9		4	8		4	6			
CAPT Shifty	4	9		5	8		3	6			

3. Sum the rating with the weighting.

Core Competences	Mission Performance			Leading Subordinates			Communication			Total	Selection Priority
	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score		
CAPT Bloggs	5	9	45	4	8	32	4	6	24		
CAPT Smart	4	9	36	4	8	32	4	6	24		
CAPT Shifty	4	9	36	5	8	40	3	6	18		

4. Total Score for each officer

Core Competences	Mission Performance			Leading Subordinates			Communication			Total	Selection Priority
	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score		
CAPT Bloggs	5	9	45	4	8	32	4	6	24	101	
CAPT Smart	4	9	36	4	8	32	4	6	24	92	
CAPT Shifty	4	9	36	5	8	40	3	6	18	94	

5. Identify priority for promotion and/or assignment.

Core Competences	Mission Performance			Leading Subordinates			Communication			Total	Selection Priority
	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score	Rating	Weight	Score		
CAPT Bloggs	5	9	45	4	8	32	4	6	24	101	1 <sup>st</sup>
CAPT Smart	4	9	36	4	8	32	4	6	24	92	3 <sup>rd</sup>
CAPT Shifty	4	9	36	5	8	40	3	6	18	94	2 <sup>nd</sup>

This will be discussed in more detail later. However, it is worthy to note at this point that if there were a group of potential candidates for one job with identically

weighted and scored performance criteria, then the promotion process may default to other criteria in the two-sided matching process as described above.

“One of the key assumptions of the theory of two-sided matching is that agents cannot be forced into a match that they do not find acceptable” (Robards, 2001, 41). This limitation highlights a potential challenge for the performance criteria based matching process. Sometimes, personnel may have strengths in a given area of performance; however, for personal reasons, they may not want to be matched with a job that requires those strengths. Sending personnel to a position that they do not desire is unlikely to motivate members to perform strongly. Robards recommends that commands “must extend their preference lists to include all [personnel] who are eligible for the billets, and then allow some latitude in certain eligibility criteria at lower preference levels” (2001, 54). This option may provide the decision support system the flexibility to adjust the assignment of such personnel.

## **B. OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this paper is three-fold: (1) attempt to provide validity for the two-sided matching process by analyzing USMC officers who receive their MOS preference on graduation from USMC TBS and whether they are more likely to succeed in their chosen MOS, (2) determine the potential for a weighted criteria promotion and assignment system by analyzing USMC FITREP reports, and (3) provide some discussion and comparison between contemporary human resource management processes and the personnel management of the USMC.

Wagenaar and Babbie provide the following summary about social science research:

Most social science research concentrates on one of three points of focus: characteristics, orientations, and actions. Characteristics refer to states of being; orientation reflect attitudes and beliefs; and actions reflect actual behaviors (Wagenaar & Babbie, 1998, 51).

This paper analyses the USMC personnel management system using a similar approach. It will attempt to cover each “point of focus” as follows:



1. **Characteristics (states of being).** Throughout the literature review, discussion and analysis there are extensive descriptions of the existing personnel management processes of the USMC.
2. **Orientations (attitudes and beliefs).** Surveys are conducted to determine the attitudes and beliefs of active-duty USMC officers at NPS.
3. **Actions (actual behaviors).** The actual FITREP results are analyzed to determine if reporting behavior across different MOS groups reflects changing importance of FITREP competencies.

To achieve this purpose we focus on four objectives:

1. Identify important considerations for optimal job matching in the workplace.
2. Present an analysis of the factors that influence a Marine Corps Officer to remain in the Marine Corps to the seven-year point. This includes an analysis of TBS graduates' MOS preferences to determine if a graduate who obtains his or her preference is more likely to remain in the Marine Corps to the seven-year point.
3. Analyze the performance criteria of USMC personnel in order to determine if there are significant differences in reporting data across MOS and ranks. By analyzing the reporting results of United States Marine Corps (USMC) FITREPS across different ranks and MOS it is hoped to identify patterns within particular performance criteria across ranks and MOS. This process is designed to identify specific performance criteria that are more important to a particular MOS and, therefore, allow a weighting to be applied to those criteria when selecting personnel for specific MOSs. The FITREP analysis uses data from the USMC Officer Accession Career File that has had reporting data merged with it from the years 1998-2001. This will provide some direction on the suitability of weighting criteria for specific MOS, which, if applicable, may improve the quality of fit for the job.
4. Conduct surveys with USMC officers and the civilian sector to: (1) provide insight into the efficacy of the current FITREP and, (2) compare the

promotion systems of the USMC with other organizations. The purpose of objective four is to determine if there are human resource management processes that may improve the USMC promotion/assignment system.

### **C. FINDINGS**

As mentioned, the purpose of this thesis is threefold. Firstly, attempt to provide validity for the two-sided matching process; secondly, analyze FITREP attributes to determine their suitability for a weighted criteria evaluation system and; thirdly, compare the USMC promotion and assignment process with contemporary human resource management practices. Using data from the Marine Corps Officer Accession Career file (MCCOAC), a logit model is used to estimate the effects of TBS preference and other officer characteristics on retention to the seven year mark. Findings indicate that there was little difference in the probability of retention throughout most preference levels except for the bottom sixth which had a markedly lower retention probability. Using USMC FITREP data from 1998 until September 2004, an ordinary least squares model is used to estimate the effects of rank and MOS on FITREP scores across all fourteen attributes. Multiple comparison tests demonstrated that there are statistical differences at the 0.05 level between the means of the MOSs. Additionally, reporting creep is continuing across all attributes at a rate of up to 0.5 in the five years analyzed.

Surveys were also conducted for two purposes. Firstly, a survey was conducted with USMC officers at NPS to determine if USMC officers believed that FITREP attributes were more or less relevant to success across each MOS. The findings indicated that USMC officers believe the FITREP attributes were not all equally important within, and across each MOS – although the USMC assesses them as such. Secondly, a survey was conducted with the USMC and other organizations to determine if there were salient differences in the understanding and practice of HRM between the USMC and other organizations. The findings indicated that the USMC promotion and assignment process can be strengthened through a clearly defined HRM plan that extends beyond ‘faces’ and ‘places’, and provides very clear links to the organizational strategy.

Based on the findings it is recommended, in the first instance, that the USMC review its HRM processes and conduct further analyses on the FITREP data for:

1. correlation,
2. cross-sectional analysis to determine suitable criterion as a predictor for success,
3. relevance and relationship of criterion to MOS characteristics, position descriptions, and organizational strategy, and
4. analyses of FITREP reporting to prevent further ‘reporting creep’ .

#### **D. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

This is the first analysis conducted of this nature. Previous research has studied grouped averages of FITREP data, and established various proxy indicators for performance; however, none have looked for reporting differences across MOS and rank. There are a wide range of issues that arise when discussing promotion and assignment systems.

Some of these questions are:

- How are selection criteria weighted for different jobs?
- How do we get information about what criteria are important within each MOS (upwards through ranks we expect that the level of importance of these criteria will increase)?
- How do we maintain consistency across responses, selection, and sensitivity analysis?
- Do we need an ‘analytical hierarchical process’?
- What is the utility for a command with this selection process?
- How many criteria do you need to make the best fit?
- How do civilian organizations select for promotion and assignment compared with the USMC?
- Are all the criteria necessary?
- How does the number of performance criteria and gathering of information affect the quality of the process, e.g., as attributes improve – what is the effect on quality of fit?

Additionally, other behavioral factors influence the process such as: (1) nepotism, (2) zero tolerance syndrome, (3) selection contrasts with policy, and other human

interventions. The previous history of reporting (prior to 1999) in the USMC demonstrated a very high reporting trend across all areas of the FITREP for officers. This high reporting trend led to evaluation scores that are over-inflated.

Despite guidance provided by the PES, the reporting is highly subjective.<sup>1</sup> So:

- Is the FITREP a suitable performance appraisal tool?
- Does it reflect the criteria that are essential to mission accomplishment?
- Do the criteria reflect the changing importance of different skills as officers progress through the chain of command?

This paper cannot answer all these questions immediately; however, it is hoped that it will provide a foundation for follow-on research and analysis that will provide further guidance on these questions.

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<sup>1</sup> The USMC has a system for ‘averaging out’ the reporting data. This system compares the average reporting data of a particular reporting officer and adjusts the overall index accordingly.

## **II. AN ANALYSIS OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY SELECTION AND RETENTION OF MARINE CORPS OFFICERS**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The primary purpose of this chapter is to attempt to provide some validation for the two-sided matching process by determining if a USMC officer's appointment to the MOS of his/her selection would influence a USMC Officer's decision to remain in the Marine Corps to the seven-year point. The effect has been defined by the authors as 'preference driven performance' – that is, USMC officers are more likely to perform well, and stay in the USMC - if they get their preferred MOS (job). Much of the two-sided matching process is premised upon the belief that if we can give an officer the job of his or her preference, then he or she is likely to perform better. A proxy for performance or success in this study is the seven year mark of service. A secondary goal is to examine the effect of an individual's ability to exercise his/her personal preference of job selection on Marine Corps officer retention.

The models in this study use the data from the Marine Corps Commissioned Accession Center (MCCOAC) file. The file includes more than 28,000 Marines. The analysis described in this chapter removes officers who enter the Marine Corps with guaranteed contracts, such as aviation and legal officers. Logistic regression models are estimated for Marines in commissioning year groups from 1986 to 1992. The data finishes in 1999, so it is not possible to assess the retention of any officers who graduated after 1992.

The Basic School (TBS) is the Marine Corps' institution to train newly commissioned officers. The school is located in Quantico, Virginia, and offers several different courses for young officers including Warrant Officer Basic Course, Reserve Warrant Officer Basic Course, Infantry Officer Course, and Basic Officer Course. The Marine Corps Martial Arts Center of Excellence is also located at TBS. Basic Officer Course (BOC) is a six-month resident program for all newly commissioned regular officers (non warrant officer). The Basic School's mission statement is as follows:

Educate newly commissioned or appointed officers in the high standards of Professional Knowledge, Esprit-de-Corps, and Leadership required to prepare them for duty as a company grade officer in the Operating Forces, with particular emphasis on the duties, responsibilities and Warfighting Skills required of a rifle platoon commander.

Six classes per year attend BOC with each class (company) having approximately 225 officers. Basic Officer Course is the primary focus of TBS and is commonly referred to simply as "TBS". The focus of this analysis is on BOC. Throughout the remainder of this paper, "TBS" will refer to BOC only.

The Basic School focuses primarily on developing, enhancing, and evaluating the leadership, communication, and decision making skills that are required of company grade officers. Company grade officers include Second Lieutenants, First Lieutenants, and Captains (O1-O3). TBS uses a combination of classroom instruction and field training exercises to accomplish the necessary education and evaluation. The program of instruction includes basic marksmanship, military history and customs, military law, basic administration, and tactics at the platoon and company levels. Officers are evaluated based on three criteria: leadership, academic performance, and warfighting skills.

The first portion of the evaluation is subjective and is based on the individual's leadership skills and ability, which are evaluated by the staff as well as peers. The second portion of the evaluation is objective and comes from exams that are given to all students after a certain number of hours of instruction. The final third of the grading is a combination of objective and subjective evaluations. The focus of this portion is on evaluating the individual's application of military skills such as martial arts, land navigation, and physical events such as the endurance course. The three evaluation criteria are weighted relatively equally (approximately a third weighting on each area), and eventually are used to determine class standing.

These evaluations play a significant role in an officer's future. The students are assigned a military occupational specialty (MOS), or job, based on TBS standing. On average, 25-30 percent of the officers in each class have a flight or legal contract which assures them of their MOS prior to TBS, regardless of their TBS class standing. The

remaining 70-75 percent of the students are not guaranteed a MOS prior to TBS. The available MOSs are allocated throughout the class standings to help ensure that each MOS receives a proportionate share of quality officers. This "quality spread" is accomplished by subdividing the class into thirds based on class standing.

Students with flight and legal contracts are not included in the selection of MOSs. The top student in each third gets his/her first choice in order of top third, middle third, and bottom third. Then the next highest student in each third gets his/her choice of the remaining billets and so on. There is some room for modification by the staff but the thirds rule generally applies to MOS selection and assignment. In addition, women are not eligible to be assigned a combat arms MOS, and only a limited number of MOSs are available for female officers. This not only limits the opportunities for female officers, but it also decreases the number of non combat arms billets for male officers.

Although TBS plays a pivotal role in the selection of MOSs, the primary mission of TBS is to prepare newly commissioned officers for the tasks and responsibilities required of a rifle platoon commander (based on the principle that "every Marine is a rifleman"). The allocation of specialties based on class standing and the quality spread creates not only a highly competitive environment, but it also creates a system where students might not receive the MOS that is best suited to maximize their skills. As a result, they may have lower productivity in their future MOSs. For example, TBS is primarily an infantry school; therefore, students who perform well at TBS will likely perform well in combat arms MOSs. Likewise, students who perform in the bottom third of TBS, will likely be better suited for non infantry MOSs. The current system of a quality spread across the thirds interferes with the self selection process of MOSs.

It is important for the policy makers to be able to determine what effects improved job fit with regard to individual officer's preferences could have on future performance. The Marine Corps invests a significant amount of time and money into training young officers at TBS and expects to maximize their return on investment in the form of performance and retention. One way to measure this return on investment is to determine the effects of TBS standing and MOS selection on future performance and retention. The effects of TBS standing will allow the policymakers at Headquarters

Marine Corps to determine how well TBS is preparing young officers for the fleet. In addition, the effects of MOS selection will allow the policy makers to determine how much emphasis should be placed on the quality spread - versus how much emphasis should be placed on maximizing individuals' choices in selecting their MOSs.

Since the Marine Corps places so much emphasis on TBS class standing with regards to the quality spread of MOS selection, it is important to validate whether TBS performance is, in fact, correlated with the officer's future performance in the fleet. In addition, it is just as important to determine what effect MOS selection has on future performance and to attempt to distinguish the effects of TBS class standing and MOS selection.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of both TBS standing and MOS selection on officer retention. The goal is to develop a model to analyze the effects of TBS standing and MOS selection on officer retention. Limitations of previous studies and an explanation of how the models developed here differ from previous models are discussed fully in the Literature Review section.

## **B. BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Ergun, "retention is defined as an individual officer's voluntary decision to remain on active duty beyond his/her initial service obligation" (Ergun, 2003). Retention is often used as a success measure for the effectiveness of certain programs and initiatives.

Previous studies concluded that TBS class standing did in fact have an impact on retention. For example, Wielsma (1996) found that higher class standing resulted in higher likelihood of staying in the Marine Corps and being promoted to Major (O-4). In addition,

### **1. Study by Quester and Hyatt (2001)**

Quester and Hyatt (2001) concluded that TBS class standing has an impact on officer retention to the five-year mark. Their study showed that 82.5 percent of officers in the top third made it to the five-year mark while only 67.6 percent in the bottom third were retained to the five-year mark.



Their study also demonstrated that the time from commissioning to promotion to O-4 has steadily decreased from 149 months in 1980 to 117 months in 1990 (Quester and Hiatt, 2001). This trend should lead to higher retention due to the higher present value of pay and non pecuniary compensation.

The Quester and Hiatt report used the data from the Marine Corps Commissioned Accession Center (MCOAC) file. This data set was created by the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) and includes over 28,000 TBS records for officers who attended TBS between 1980 and 1999. They began their study by validating the data and stated, "Although the quality of Marine Corps data is very good, the data are not perfect" (Quester and Hiatt, 2001).

Next, Quester and Hiatt constructed useful variables from the MCOAC file. These variables included: TBS standing by top, middle, or bottom thirds; accession program; time to full duty (commissioning date to active duty); time to First Lieutenant, Captain, Major, and Lieutenant Colonel; top half of General Classification Test (GCT); number of months that the officer was in the Marine Corps after commissioning; and various gender and racial variables. Their study showed that retention at the five-year point was 67.6 percent for the bottom third of TBS class, 78.1 percent for the middle third, and 82.5 percent for the top third (Quester and Hiatt, 2001).

The Quester and Hiatt report provided some useful insight, but the report was limited in regards to information about the statistical techniques that were used. One of the more useful ideas that came from their report was keeping TBS class standings in thirds rather than ranking the entire class from top to bottom.

Another insightful piece of information that came from the report was the trend that the time from commissioning to promotion to O-4 decreased 20 percent from 1980 to 1990. This decrease in time to promotion is likely a direct result of the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA). DOPMA was an act of Congress that in 1980 established laws standardizing the maximum percentages of officers by grade across each branch of service. Before DOPMA, the Marine Corps had a reputation as the slowest promoting branch of service. DOPMA was an attempt to save personnel cost by having a

more junior force. DOPMA forced the Marine Corps to reduce the average promotion times to each officer rank (Rostker, Thie, & Lacy, 1993).

The Quester and Hiatt report was beneficial, but there are some important weaknesses of their study. First, their conclusion that higher class standing at TBS resulted in a higher retention level to the five-year mark did not take into account factors which might induce selection bias. These factors include prior enlisted experience and inclusion of officers with contracts up to and past the five-year point. For example, prior enlisted experience might bias the model due to previous time accrued which will shorten the time required for retirement eligibility.

As a result, the present value of the retirement benefit is much greater at five-years of commissioned service for prior enlisted than for non prior enlisted officers. Second, those in certain MOSs, such as aviators, have contracts that take the officers well past the five-year decision point. By including aviators, the model will show higher retention levels than if they were excluded. The third factor is that Naval Academy graduates have a five-year commitment, which is longer than the three or four year commitment for the other commissioning programs; this will have an effect similar to that of the aviation contracts.

These three factors will likely overstate the average for retention at the five-year point and therefore not be a good measure of TBS success. In addition, not all Naval Academy classes sent graduates to Officer Candidate School (OCS). This would likely place certain Naval Academy graduates at a disadvantage relative to their peers and affect their relative performance at TBS.

Overall, the Quester and Hiatt report provided useful insight that will be beneficial to this chapter, but since the report lacked detailed information on statistical methods, another study that would provide in-depth information was needed.

## **2. Study by North and Goldhaber (1995)**

A more in-depth study on retention and minorities was conducted by North and Goldhaber. The study used a merged file consisting of the Headquarters Master File and the TBS file and adds information from FY 1987 through 1993 augmentation and promotion boards. They use two models to analyze the retention levels to seven-years of

commissioned service (YCS) and retention from 7 YCS to 11 YCS. They exclude the officers who were passed over for promotion or who were not augmented.

This introduction of selection bias will likely inflate their retention results. The model that examines retention to 7 YCS includes 2,818 observations from FY 1985-1987 cohorts. The model that looks at retention from 7 YCS to 11 YCS for the FY 1980-1983 cohorts includes 2,396 observations. The retention to 7 YCS model explains 33 percent of the variation in retention and shows that significant differences in retention are due to commissioning source, occupational type, marital status, GCT score, and the leadership portion of TBS class rank (North and Goldhaber, 1995).

### **3. Study by Ergun (2003)**

The results of both models indicate that TBS leadership class rank percentile is a very strong predictor of retention, whereas TBS academic and military skills class rank percentile variables do not explain retention significantly. The predicted retention rate to 7 YCS for Marines having the lowest TBS leadership class rank percentile is 15 percentage points less than those who rank at the top of their class. The difference between the same groups is 13 percentage points for retention to 11 YCS (Ergun, 2003).

The study also reports that prior enlisted officers who were commissioned through the Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program (MECEP) and made it to 7 YCS were ten percent more likely to remain to 11 YCS. There are several probable reasons for this increased retention rate. First, prior enlisted officers have already self selected to remain in the military. Second, prior enlisted officers have better information about the military lifestyle.

A more specific reason for MECEP accessions having higher retention rates is that MECEP is the most selective and sought after prior enlistment accession source. This is due to MECEP allowing service members to accrue pay and retirement credit while they are in college. The selection of the accession program by individuals as well as by the Marine Corps would add to the effects of selection bias on an analysis of performance at TBS. A final reason why prior service might increase retention rates is that prior enlisted officers are closer to retirement eligibility. This will increase the present value of retirement benefits for prior enlisted officers. The possible reasons for

an increased retention rate are a matter of concern when these retention rates are used to help explain TBS performance as a predictor of future performance.

In addition, these two studies do not account for the effect of prior service experience on TBS performance. Previous studies indicate that prior enlisted officers have a 10.5 percent higher TBS class standing (Finley, 2002). Since prior enlisted officers are already familiar with the Marine Corps, they have an initial advantage over non prior service officers at TBS. There is no indication that this advantage will be sustained after TBS and a study by Ergun found that prior enlisted officers had a negative effect on promotion to O-5 (Ergun, 2003). Therefore, having prior enlisted officers in the data might give an inaccurate picture of the relationship between TBS performance and retention.

#### **4. Study by Porter and Lawler (1968)**

It is appropriate to pay attention to the often discussed ‘satisfaction-productivity controversy’, first expounded as the ‘Expectancy Theory’ by Porter and Lawler in 1968. The controversy is based upon the question: Are happy workers productive workers? Studies following Porter and Lawler on worker productivity have shown that worker satisfaction has a relatively small effect on worker productivity. Research that controlled for causal factors demonstrated that productivity is more likely to lead to satisfaction, rather than the reverse effect.

Porter and Lawler also showed that satisfaction-performance correlations are stronger as employees progress higher in the organization. These studies stand in contrast to the belief that employees will be happier if they get the job of their preference. According to Porter and Lawler, managers will get better performance if they focus on providing ways for employees to become more productive. This controversy also recognizes that an employee may not get the job of their preference; however, good leadership that helps them develop and be more productive will still be likely to bring the employee more satisfaction – which may be demonstrated by retention.

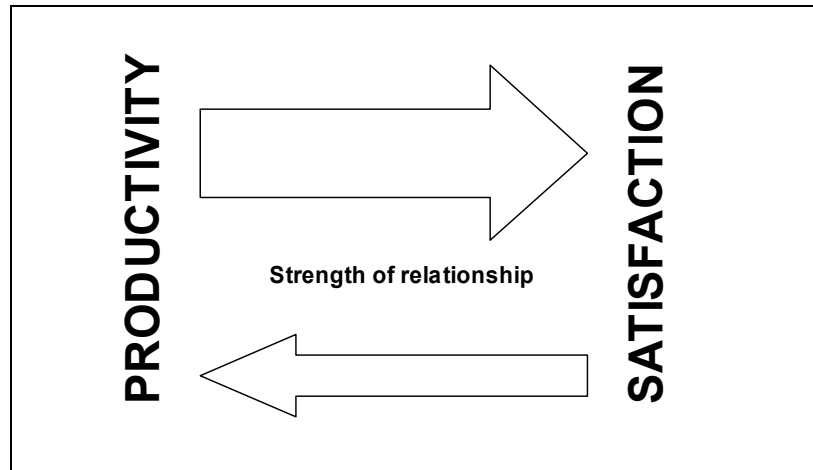


Figure 1. Likelihood of Productivity Leading to Satisfaction Compared with the Reverse Effect

Amongst all these well-worn discussions about individual valence differences in worker rewards it is appropriate to note the recent work of Alan Wilson who contends that this complex relationship has not been adequately researched (2004). Suffice to note that there are many influences on worker performance; some are endogenous, and some are exogenous (i.e., they are outside the influence of the employee). To this effect, the relationship between satisfaction and performance also appears stronger when the employee is less controlled by external factors. This is similar to the basic demand and control model of stress. This model states that in positions of high demand: the more control an employee possesses – the less stress they will experience.

## 5. Summary

The retention models used in the literature reviews primarily use the MCCOAC records for their data and use logistic regression to model the effects on retention. The logistic models are a function of marital status, commissioning age, gender, ethnicity group, TBS standing, MOS group, prior enlisted service, and commissioning fiscal year. Both the Quester and Hiatt study and the North and Goldhaber study report that the retention rate for the bottom third of TBS class standing is 15 percentage points lower than for the top third.

A study by Hoglin (2004) showed similar results, indicating increased retention with higher TBS class standing. This study demonstrated that officers who graduate in

the top TBS third, on average, stayed in the Marine Corps for 77 months, whereas, officers in the bottom third stayed an average of only 67.6 months, as shown in Table 1. These results demonstrate a positive relationship between retention and TBS class standing.

Table 1. Length of Commissioned Service by TBS Class Rank Separated Officers (1986-1999)

	<b>Average length of commissioned service Prior enlisted (months)</b>	<b>Average length of commissioned service Non-prior enlisted (months)</b>	<b>Average length of commissioned for all separated officers (months)</b>
<b>Top Third</b>	72.27	78.50	77.05
<b>Middle Third</b>	65.83	76.18	73.86
<b>Bottom Third</b>	58.42	70.91	67.63
<b>Total</b>	64.31	74.77	72.24

Source. MCCOAC Data, Courtesy (From Hoglin, 2004).

Both professional and academic institutions have researched the relationship between TBS standing and retention in great detail. Unfortunately, there is very little published research on the use of a quality spread at TBS and the effect of personal selection of MOS on future performance. The little research that has been done dealt primarily with improving the processes by which MOSs are assigned within each TBS third.

A study by Goldschmidt and Boersma attempted to automate the process of assigning MOSs within each third. They were able to improve MOS selection satisfaction among the thirds, but their study did not examine the effects of improved MOS selection on future performance (Goldschmidt and Boersma, 2003).

The background information and literature review of the relationship between TBS performance and retention provides the underlying basis for this chapter's models and techniques. Previous research provides a basic prediction of the effects of officer attributes on retention. One such study by Hoglin states, "officers who are married, commissioned through MECEP, graduate in the top third of their TBS class, and are assigned to a combat support MOS have a better survival rate than officers who are unmarried, commissioned through the USNA, graduate in the middle third of their TBS

class, and are assigned to either combat or combat service support MOS" (Hoglin, 2004). The models developed in the next section of this chapter to help explain MOS selection and retention are a variation of the TBS performance and retention models discussed in this literature review.

### **C. MODELS**

The literature review provided the underlying basis for this chapter's model. Based on the weaknesses of previous studies that ignored the effect of the length of obligated service and guaranteed MOSs of aviation and legal contracts on retention, this study will only use officers with ground contracts. The reasons for removing aviators are twofold; the first is due to their contract length that takes them past seven-years of commissioned service. The second reason is that aviators, similar to legal officers, have guaranteed MOSs prior to TBS. Since the MCCOAC file is quite large, this study's focus on only ground officers without guaranteed MOSs should not create a problem with sample size. Also, because Naval Academy graduates have a contract of five-years, this study will go past the five-year mark and study retention at the seven-year mark. This seven-year mark should help counter the Naval Academy contract influence on retention, while maintaining the integrity of the effect of TBS class standing on retention. Due to initial contracts lasting three to five-years, the seven-year mark was used to determine retention.

The use of any length of commissioned service past nine to ten-years of commissioned service would lead to other factors that would affect retention. These factors include that some prior enlisted officers will be eligible for retirement around the ten-year mark of commissioned service.

Another factor is that the ten-year mark of commissioned service is usually considered to be the "point of no return" where the financial benefits of a 20 year retirement outweigh most decisions to voluntarily leave the service. Consideration was given to the possibility of using promotion as the measure of performance. There are several problems that arise from using promotion as a measure of performance. For example, there is a significant portion of prior enlisted officers who would be eligible for retirement prior to reaching the point of consideration by the O-4 or O-5 promotion

boards. Ergun found that prior enlisted status had a negative effect on promotion to O-5 (Ergun, 2003).

Another problem with using promotion as the measure of performance is that there is a disparity in promotion rates among different MOSs. These factors would introduce selection bias and its magnitude would be difficult to measure. Therefore, the disadvantages of using promotion as a measure of performance outweighed the benefits.

This study uses logistic regression to model retention as a function of success in MOS selection, TBS class standing, marital status at grade of 1stLt, General Classification Test (measure of mental ability), commissioning age, gender, ethnicity group, commissioning source, MOS group, and commissioning fiscal year. The commissioning source does not include officers from the Meritorious Commissioning Program (MCP) - since the data set from 1986 to 1992 only contains one officer. The theoretical model below is the basis for the regression analysis.

$$\text{Retention to Seven-year Point} = f(\text{MOS preference, TBS class standing, marital status, GCT score, commissioning age, gender, ethnicity, commissioning source, MOS, commissioning year})$$

The hypothesis of this study is that officers who are successful in obtaining one of their MOS preferences will have higher retention to the seven-year point. This hypothesis is important to decision makers since improved retention should decrease overall costs. The Marine Corps spends over \$68 million per year (in 2003 dollars) on officer accessions. The average cost to access an officer in 2003 dollars is \$51,637 alone and the training cost will likely be much higher (Hoglin, 2004). Table 2 lists the some of the costs and benefits of increased retention.

Table 2. Benefits and Costs of Increased Retention Rates

Benefits	Costs
Increase in experience and productivity	Increased PCS cost moves
Fewer recruiters for officers	Increased recruiters for enlisted personnel
Less officer advertising	Increased enlisted personnel advertising
Fewer training costs	Increased salaries from 'ageing the force'

Courtesy (Hoglin, 2004).



This hypothesis will be tested by using a model with explanatory variables that will likely affect retention. If the effect of successful MOS selection is positive and statistically significant, then the hypothesis that officers who are successful in obtaining one of their MOS preferences will have higher retention to the seven-year point will be supported.

The study differs from previous studies in several ways. First, previous models primarily used a marriage variable based on the officers' status at time of commissioning. This study uses the marital status as a 1stLt which should provide a more accurate account of marital status' role in retention at the seven-year mark. Promotion to 1stLt is all but guaranteed and should be encountered prior to any decision point regarding leaving the Marine Corps. Therefore, using the marital status as a 1stLt will provide the benefit of a more accurate indicator without inducing selection bias.

Furthermore, this analysis differs from previous studies by the inclusion of a variable that determines whether or not an officer receives his/her MOS preference. This inclusion of MOS preference is the most important difference between this study and previous research.

A proxy had to be developed to measure whether or not an officer received one of their MOSs preferences because the data did not include MOS preferences until 1994, which is after the cutoff date of 1992 that was established to limit the study to those officers who have an opportunity to stay in the Marine Corps up to the seven-year point. This proxy was created by separating each TBS class third into top and bottom halves. The theory is that officers in the top half of each third are more likely to receive one of their MOS preferences than officers who are in the bottom half of each third. The hypothesized effects of the explanatory variables are shown in Table 3.

Married officers are expected to have higher retention rates since they have more fringe benefits, such as health care and housing, as well as an increased preference for job security due to financial responsibilities for dependents. Commissioning age is expected to have a positive sign since officers commissioned later, on average, would be more likely to have made a more informed choice about their career opportunities in the civilian sector prior to taking their commission. In addition, commissioning age will

likely be correlated with prior enlisted status due to the time served prior to commissioning.

Previous research on the effect of being female on retention is contradictory. North and Goldhaber (1995) found that female officers were expected to have twenty percent lower retention rates than male officers. Whereas, Ergun (2003) found that being female had a positive effect on retention. Minority officers are expected to have a higher retention rates due to perceived lower opportunities in the civilian sector. The top half of the top third of TBS class standing is expected to have higher retention rates than the top half of the middle third (base case).

Both groups are expected to receive one of their MOS preferences and prior research has demonstrated that TBS performance has a positive effect on retention (Ergun, 2003). The bottom half of the top third of TBS class standing is indeterminate from the base case since there are two opposing influences. The bottom half of the top third is less likely to receive one of their MOS choices, but are higher in TBS class standing than the base case. The remainder of the TBS class categories are expected to have lower retention rates than the base case since they did not receive one of their MOS choices and/or their class standing was below that of the base case.

Based on previous research, prior enlisted officers, specifically prior enlisted officers who are commissioned through MECEP, are expected to have higher retention than non prior enlisted officers (Hoglin, 2004). In addition, prior enlisted officers are already familiar with the Marine Corps way of life and are closer to retirement eligibility. Also, with the exception of MECEP, USNA graduates are expected to have higher retention than other commissioning sources (Ergun, 2003). The variables that have both the qualities of prior enlisted and USNA or MECEP are expected to have higher retention than the base case of non prior service USNA graduates. The effects of prior enlisted status and 'not from the USNA' are indeterminate from non prior service USNA graduates due to the opposing effects of prior enlisted and not being a USNA graduate.

Based on prior research, the variables that are non prior enlisted and not from the USNA are expected to have lower retention than non prior service USNA graduates (Ergun, 2003). The effect of the year an officer is commissioned is unknown when

compared with the commissioning year of 1986 (base case), but there was a drawdown in the size of the Marine Corps in the early 1990's. This drawdown could negatively affect the commissioning year groups seven-years prior to the drawdown which would include the years 1986, 1987, and 1989. A drawdown in the size of the Marine Corps would reduce the level of officers required and therefore a lower percentage of officers would need to be retained.

Hoglin's study found that combat support MOS had higher retention than both combat and combat service support MOSs (Hoglin, 2004). Hoglin hypothesized:

The effect of MOS is likely to vary across the categories because of the relative transferability of skills. It is hypothesized that officers who have obtained skills associated with their MOS that are easily transferable to jobs outside the military are more likely to leave the military than those with skills particularly unique to the military. For this reason it could be expected that Combat MOS officers would remain longer than Combat Support (CS) officers who would in turn stay longer than Combat Service Support (CSS) officers.

#### **D. DATA, SAMPLES, AND PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS**

The source of the data is the Marine Corps Commissioned Accession Center (MCOAC) file. This data includes over 28,000 TBS records for officers who attended TBS between 1980 and 1999. For this model, only years 1986 to 1999 were used. The data prior to 1986 was not as complete as that for later years. Since the data ended in 1999, officers who were commissioned between 1993 and 1999 were removed from the data because they did not have a chance to reach the seven-year retention point. The MCOAC file has individuals' first three MOS preferences for years 1994 through 1999. Due to the truncation of the data after 1993, a proxy had to be developed to explain the effects of receiving MOS preference.

A final important point worth noting is that there is very little difference in retention rates at the seven-year point of subgroups TBS2A, TBS2B, and TBS3A. This lack of variation in retention rates of these three subgroups does not support the hypothesis that officers who are successful in obtaining one of their MOS preferences will have higher retention to the seven-year point.

This lack of support for the hypothesis could be caused by several factors, such as: selection of an inaccurate proxy to determine MOS preference success; officers may have imperfect information regarding MOS selection; or officers may be more interested in being Marines than they are about their specific MOS.

Table 3. Hypothesized Effects of Explanatory Variables on Retention at Seven-years of Commissioned Service

Variable Name	Expected Sign
<b>Individual Characteristics</b>	
Married at time of 1stLt record	+ (compared to not married)
Commissioning Age	+
Female	? (compared to male)
White	Base Ethnicity Group
African American	+
Hispanic	+
Other Race	+
<b>Ability</b>	
<b>TBS Class Rank Percentile</b>	
Top Half, Top Third (TBS 1A)	+
Bottom Half, Top Third (TBS 1B)	?
Top Half, Middle Third (TBS 2A)	Base TBS Class Rank Percentile
Bottom Half, Middle Third (TBS 2B)	-
Top Half, Bottom Third (TBS 3A)	-
Bottom Half, Bottom Third (TBS 3B)	-
General Classification Test	-
Non-Prior USNA	Base Accession Source
Prior USNA	+
Non-Prior NROTC	-
Prior NROTC	?
Non-Prior PLC	-
Prior PLC	?
Non-Prior OCC	-
Prior OCC	?
MECEP	+
ECP	?
<b>Commissioning Year</b>	
1986	Base Commissioning Year
1987	?
1988	?
1999	?
1990	?
1991	?
1992	?
<b>MOS Type</b>	
Combat Support	Base MOS Type
Combat	-
Combat Service Support	-

Table 4. Description of Explanatory Variables

Variable	Definition
retto7yrs	<b>1 if</b> Retained to Seven Years of Commissioned Service
TBS1A	<b>1 if</b> in Top Half of Top Third
TBS1B	<b>1 if</b> in Bottom Half of Top Third
TBS2A	Top Half of Middle Third (base case)
TBS2B	<b>1 if</b> in Bottom Half of Middle Third
TBS3A	<b>1 if</b> in Top Half of Bottom Third
TBS3B	<b>1 if</b> in Bottom Half of Bottom Third
PRIOR_PLC	<b>1 if</b> Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through Platoon Leaders Course
NONPRIOR_PLC	<b>1 if</b> Not Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through Platoon Leaders Course
PRIOR_OCC	<b>1 if</b> Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through Officer Candidates Course
NONPRIOR_OCC	<b>1 if</b> Not Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through Officer Candidates Course
PRIOR_NROTC	<b>1 if</b> Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps
NONPRIOR_NROTC	<b>1 if</b> Not Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps
PRIOR_USNA	<b>1 if</b> Prior Enlisted and Commissioned Through United States Naval Academy
NONPRIOR_USNA	Not Prior Enlisted Commissioned Through United States Naval Academy ( <b>base case</b> )
MECEP	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Through Marine Enlisted Commissioning Education Program
ECP	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned
married	<b>1 if</b> Married at Time of 1stLt Record
female	<b>1 if</b> Female Officer
comm_86	Commissioned Fiscal Year 1986 ( <b>base case</b> )
comm_87	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Fiscal Year 1987
comm_88	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Fiscal Year 1988
comm_89	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Fiscal Year 1989
comm_90	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Fiscal Year 1990
comm_91	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Fiscal Year 1991
comm_92	<b>1 if</b> Commissioned Fiscal Year 1992
comm_age	Age (in years) at Commissioning
white	Ethnicity is White ( <b>base case</b> )
black	<b>1 if</b> Ethnicity is Black
hispanic	<b>1 if</b> Ethnicity is Hispanic
other race	<b>1 if</b> Ethnicity is Other
GCT_CAT	<b>1 if</b> General Classification Test Score Above 125
combat	<b>1 if</b> Combat Arms MOS
combat_spt	Combat Support MOS ( <b>base case</b> )
combat_svc_spt	<b>1 if</b> Combat Service Support MOS

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Retention at 7 YCS and TBS class standing, 7134 observations

	Top Third of TBS	Middle Third of TBS	Bottom Third of TBS
<b>Retained to 7 YCS</b>	1330	<b>1196</b>	1136
Percent Retained	62%	52%	42%
<b>Not retained to 7 YCS</b>	816	<b>1111</b>	1544
Percent Not Retained	38%	48%	58%
Total	2146	<b>2307</b>	2680

The results shown in Table 5 are consistent with prior research that retention rates differ 15 percent from the bottom third to top third (Quester and Hiatt, 2001

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Retention at 7 YCS and TBS class standing broken down by MOS preference proxy, 7134 observations

	TBS1A Top Half of Top Third of TBS	TBS1B Bottom Half of Top Third of TBS	TBS2A Top Half of Middle Third of TBS	TBS2B Bottom Half of Middle Third of TBS	TBS3A Top Half of Bottom Third of TBS	TBS3B Bottom Half of Bottom Third of TBS
<b>Retained to 7 YCS</b>	684	646	<b>602</b>	594	594	542
Percent Retained	63%	60%	52%	52%	48%	38%
<b>Not retained to 7 YCS</b>	394	422	<b>561</b>	550	649	895
Percent Not Retained	37%	40%	48%	48%	52%	62%
Total	1078	1068	<b>1163</b>	1144	1243	1437

Table 6 separates each third into top and bottom halves and shows the retention rates for each subgroup. The differences in retention rates at the seven-year point among subgroups demonstrates some interesting points. One point worth noting is that the bottom half of the bottom third, which represents approximately the bottom 16 percent of the TBS class standing, has only a 38 percent retention rate. This is well below the average retention rate of 54.1 percent for officers with ground contracts. This low retention rate could be because the bottom 16 percent of TBS students have a poor fit with the Marine Corps way of life and/or, in general, have lower ability.

The increased retention rates of the top third, 62 percent, could be an indicator that TBS performance is a good indicator of future retention and performance. This is consistent with previous research on retention and performance (Ergun, 2003).

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics and Retention Rates by Variable, 7134 Observations

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Retention Rate
retto7ycs	0.5414	0.4983	0.5414
TBS1A	0.15964	0.3663	0.6345
TBS1B	0.1520	0.3590	0.6049
TBS2A	0.1634	0.3697	0.5176
TBS2B	0.1607	0.3763	0.5192
TBS3A	0.1722	0.3776	0.4779
TBS3B	0.1921	0.3940	0.3772
PRIOR_PLC	0.0444	0.2060	0.5089
NONPRIOR_PLC	0.2376	0.4256	0.4314
PRIOR_OCC	0.1344	0.3411	0.4512
NONPRIOR_OCC	0.1207	0.3259	0.4468
PRIOR_NROTC	0.0153	0.1226	0.6095
NONPRIOR_NROTC	0.2615	0.4395	0.5486
PRIOR_USNA	0.0034	0.05800	0.6800
NONPRIOR_USNA	0.1033	0.3044	0.5930
MECEP	0.0411	0.1983	0.8766
ECP	0.0350	0.1837	0.5993
married	0.4197	0.4936	0.5695
female	0.0463	0.2102	0.5058
comm_86	0.1436	0.3508	0.5588
comm_87	0.1793	0.3837	0.4850
comm_88	0.1435	0.3506	0.4742
comm_89	0.1199	0.3248	0.4893
comm_90	0.1181	0.3227	0.5332
comm_91	0.1433	0.3504	0.5177
comm_92	0.1523	0.3594	0.5460
comm_age	23.2798	2.0295	N/A
white	0.8597	0.3473	0.5162
black	0.0646	0.2459	0.4957
hispanic	0.0382	0.1916	0.4982
other race	0.0375	0.1899	0.4947
GCT_CAT	0.5243	0.4996	0.5341
combat	0.4515	0.4975	0.5489
combat_spt	0.1735	0.3787	0.5783
combat_svc_spt	0.3750	0.4842	0.5031



## E. RESULTS OF MULTIVARIATE MODELS

Table 8. Estimation Results of Seven Year Retention Model, 7134 observations

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	Prediction	Partial Effect	P-Value
Intercept/base	-0.8144	0.4310	0.73213	-0.00000	0.0588
TBS1A	0.1744	0.1018	0.76492	0.03279	0.0866
TBS1B	0.2329	0.0999	0.77527	0.04314	0.0197
TBS2B	-0.0797	0.0965	0.71621	-0.01592	0.4091
TBS3A	-0.2189	0.0951	0.68710	-0.04503	0.0214
TBS3B	-0.6240	0.0963	0.59423	-0.13790	< .0001
PRIOR_PLC	-0.5063	0.1595	0.62225	-0.10988	0.0015
NONPRIOR_PLC	-0.7246	0.1054	0.56976	-0.16237	< .0001
PRIOR_OCC	-0.7102	0.1230	0.57328	-0.15885	< .0001
NONPRIOR_OCC	-0.7241	0.1229	0.56987	-0.16226	< .0001
PRIOR_NROTC	-0.0750	0.2509	0.71716	-0.01497	0.7650
NONPRIOR_NROTC	-0.2142	0.1021	0.68810	-0.04403	0.0359
PRIOR_USNA	0.2033	0.5398	0.77008	0.03795	0.7064
MECEP	1.0754	0.2518	0.88902	0.15689	< .0001
ECP	-0.5017	0.1881	0.62334	-0.10879	0.0076
married	0.2878	0.0586	0.78470	0.05257	< .0001
female	0.1418	0.1379	0.75901	0.02688	0.3038
comm_87	-0.3984	0.0995	0.64727	-0.08486	< .0001
comm_88	-0.5549	0.1054	0.61076	-0.12137	< .0001
comm_89	-0.2953	0.1111	0.67043	-0.06170	0.0078
comm_90	-0.1497	0.1114	0.70178	-0.03035	0.1790
comm_91	-0.2527	0.1068	0.67978	-0.05235	0.0180
comm_92	-0.2259	0.1081	0.68558	-0.04655	0.0366
comm_age	0.0782	0.0182	0.74718	0.01505	< .0001
black	0.0896	0.1179	0.74932	0.01719	0.4476
hispanic	0.0477	0.1475	0.74137	0.00924	0.7466
other race	0.1807	0.1465	0.76605	0.03392	0.2174
GCT_CAT	-0.0983	0.0611	0.71241	-0.01972	0.1076
combat	-0.0621	0.0807	0.71977	-0.01236	0.4413
combat_spt	-0.2167	0.0820	0.68756	-0.04457	0.0082

Model Fit: Max Rescaled R-Squared- 0.103      % Correct Prediction- 60%

The model was expanded to isolate each accession source and the prior enlisted variable. Consideration was given to possibly adding a squared term for commissioning age to the model because of a possible non-linear additional effect on retention due to an increase in age. Due to the limited age range of the observations, it was determined that the current model would likely provide the best functional form.

The model is estimated with 7,134 observations for officers with ground contracts from 1986 to 1992. The following variables are statistically insignificant (therefore, no effect on the dependent variable): the bottom half of the middle third of TBS class standing (TBS2B), prior enlisted NROTC, prior enlisted USNA, female, commissioning year of 1990, GCT category, combat MOS, and all of the ethnicity variables. Joint significance tests were run on the following groups of variables: commissioning year group, commissioning source group, MOS group, and ethnic group. These groups were statistically significant except for the ethnic variables. The probability of the ethnic variables being jointly insignificant was 0.5666, and the probabilities of the other three variables being jointly insignificant were all less than 0.0001.

A notional officer who was a 23.3 year-old white male, non married, non-prior enlisted USNA graduate, with a TBS class standing in the top half of the middle third, and commissioned in 1986 had an average retention rate at the seven-year point of 73.2 percent, and is the basis for the partial effects calculation. Therefore, this notional probability of retention to the seven-year mark was 73.2 percent.

The commissioning source/prior service variables - besides prior enlisted NROTC and prior enlisted USNA - were all statistically significant at the 0.01 level except non-prior service NROTC, which was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Non-prior service officers that came through PLC, OCC, and NROTC have 16.2, 16.2, and 4.4 percentage points, respectively, lower retention at seven-years compared to officers that graduated from the non-prior USNA, *ceteris paribus*.

Prior service officers that came through PLC, OCC, ECP, and NROTC have 11.0, 15.9, 10.9 and 1.5 percentage points, respectively, lower retention at seven-years compared to officers that graduated from the non-prior USNA, *ceteris paribus*. Officers that came through MECEP have 15.7 percentage points higher retention at the seven-year mark compared to non-prior officers that graduated from the USNA, *ceteris paribus*.

The married and commissioning age variables were statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Officers who were married as a First Lieutenant have a 5.3 percentage point higher retention at the seven-year mark compared to non married officers, *ceteris paribus*.

Officers who were, on average, one year older than the mean age of 23.3 at the time of commissioning have 1.5 percentage points higher retention at the seven-year mark compared to the mean age commissioned officers, *ceteris paribus*. This 1.5 percentage point higher retention has a larger practical significance as the commissioning age deviates upwards or downwards from the mean. For example, an officer who is four years older than the average has a much larger increase in retention probability due to age than an officer who is only one year older than the average, *ceteris paribus*.

The combat service support MOS variable was statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Officers with combat service support MOSs had a 4.5 percent lower retention at the seven-year mark compared to officers with combat support MOSs, *ceteris paribus*. The Primary MOSs were assigned to the occupational fields identified in Table 9.

Table 9. Primary Military Occupational Specialties Assigned to Occupational Field

MOS	Description	MOS	Description
<b>Combat Arms Occupational Group</b>			
03XX	Infantry	08XX	Artillery
18XX	Tank and Assault Amphibian Vehicle		
<b>Combat Support Occupational Group</b>			
02XX	Intelligence	05XX	Marine Air Ground Task Force Plans
13XX	Engineer, Construction, Facilities and Equipment	21XX	Ordnance
23XX	Ammunition and Explosive Ordnance Disposal	25XX	Operational Communications
26XX	Signals Intelligence / Ground Electronics	60/61XX	Aircraft Maintenance
63/64XX	Avionics	65XX	Aviation Ordnance
72XX	Air Control / Air Support / Anti-air Warfare / Air Traffic Control	73XX	Navigation Officer / Enlisted Flight Crews
75XX	Naval Pilots / Naval Flight Officers		
<b>Combat Service Support Occupational Group</b>			
01XX	Personnel and Administration	04XX	Logistics
06XX	Command and Control Systems	11XX	Utilities
28XX	Ground Electronics Maintenance	30XX	Supply Administration and Operations
31XX	Traffic Management	33XX	Food Service
34XX	Financial Management	35XX	Motor Transport
40XX	Data Systems	41XX	Marine Corps Exchange
43XX	Public Affairs	44XX	Legal Services
46XX	Visual Information	55XX	Music
57XX	Nuclear, Biological and Chemical	58XX	Military Police and Corrections
59XX	Electronics Maintenance	66XX	Aviation Logistics
68XX	Meteorological and Oceanographic (METOC) Services	70XX	Airfield Services

Source: From Hoglin (2004)

All of the commissioning years were statistically significant at the 0.10 level or better except for 1990, but 1990 was jointly significant. The coefficients of the other commissioning years ranged from 3.0 to 12.1 percent lower retention at the seven-year mark compared to officers who were commissioned in 1986, *ceteris paribus*. The only practical significance in these coefficients is that there is a possible trend that commissioning years 1987 and 1992 have much lower retention due to the downsizing of the Marine Corps in the early 1990's. This trend would have to be explored in greater detail before any conclusions are drawn.

The TBS class standing/MOS preference variables were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, except for class standings TBS2B, which was statistically insignificant. Officers who were in the class standings TBS1A and TBS1B have 3.3 and 4.3 percentage points, respectively, higher retention at the seven-year mark compared to officers who were in the class standing TBS2A, *ceteris paribus*. Officers who were in the class standings TBS3A and TBS3B have 4.5 and 13.8 percentage points, respectively, lower retention at the seven-year mark compared to officers who were in the class standing TBS2A, *ceteris paribus*.

The results of the TBS class standing/MOS preference coefficients of the model are too inconclusive to support the hypothesis that officers who are successful in obtaining one of their MOS preferences will have higher retention to the seven-year point. There is clear evidence that the top third of TBS class standing has a positive effect, 3.3 to 4.3 percentage points, on retention to the seven-year point compared to the top half of the middle third of class standing. There is also clear evidence that the bottom half of the bottom third of TBS class standing has a significant and practical negative effect, 13.8 percentage points, on retention to the seven-year point compared to the top half of the middle third of class standing.

What is not clear is the magnitude of the effects of TBS class standing and the effects of the lack of success of MOS selection on retention to the seven-year point. For instance, officers in TBS1A have only 3.3 percentage points higher retention rates than officers in TBS2A. Officers in TBS1B have 4.3 percentage points higher retention rates than officers in TBS2A. Based on the literature background, the officers in TBS1A

should have higher retention rates than officers in TBS1B when compared with officers in TBS2A. In addition, the officers in TBS1B are not expected to be successful in receiving their MOS preference. In theory, officers in TBS1B should have lower retention rates than officers in TBS1A. One explanation for this could be that the officers in TBS1A are extremely capable individuals and therefore have better civilian opportunities. The comparative advantages of a successful career outside the USMC may attract the higher performing USMC officers.

In order to address concerns about TBS1B having higher retention rates than TBS1A, another model was used that set TBS1B as the base case. The difference between TBS1B and TBS1A was statistically insignificant, p-value of 0.5471. Correlation matrices were also checked and no unexpected correlation between the variables existed. Similarly, an additional model was used that set TBS3B as the base case. This model determined that TBS3A and TBS3B were statistically different, p-value of 0.0001.

Two additional models were developed to isolate the effect of an officer receiving his or her MOS choice on retention. This first additional model is as follows:

Retention to Seven-year Point =  $f$  (*TBS third, Top Half of TBS third, marital status, GCT score, commissioning age, gender, ethnicity, commissioning source, MOS, commissioning year*)

This model showed results similar to the original model and showed that officers who were in the top half of their third were 3 percentage points more likely to be retained to the seven-year point than officers in the bottom half of their third

The second additional model uses interaction terms to isolate the MOS preference effect and is as follows:

Retention to Seven-year Point =  $f$  (*TBS third \* Top Half of TBS third, marital status, GCT score, commissioning age, gender, ethnicity, commissioning source, MOS, commissioning year*)

Again, this model showed similar results as the original model. Officers who were in the top half of the top third of TBS class standing were 5 percentage points more likely to be retained than officers in the top half of the middle third of TBS class standing. In addition, officers who were in the top half of the bottom third of TBS class standing were 1.2 percentage points less likely to be retained than officers in the top half of the middle third of TBS class standing.

Both these models have a substantial drawback. These two models remove the bottom half of the bottom third. The original model demonstrated that the majority of the negative retention rates could be attributed to this bottom half of the bottom third. Any removal of this group would induce sample bias and inflate the effects of the explanatory variables.

Another major challenge with the models in this chapter is the selection of a proxy to determine success in MOS selection. This proxy was selected based on TBS class standing assuming that officers in the top half of each third are more likely to receive one of their MOS preferences. There are several factors that could cause this proxy to be inaccurate. One such factor is that some officers in the bottom half of each third are likely to receive one of their MOS preferences. Likewise, officers in the top half of each third may not get one of their MOS preferences.

Another factor that could cause this proxy to be inaccurate is that the class standings include officers with guaranteed contracts, such as aviation and legal MOS. The MOSs are allocated after the removal of the officers with guaranteed contracts. In addition, MOS selection is conducted prior to the final graded events. Therefore, an officer's standing could change from MOS selection time to graduation. This would cause the top third of TBS class standing to differ from the top third in regards to MOS selection. For example, an officer may graduate in the middle third, but for MOS selection he was in the top third. It was not possible to account for this limitation in the creation of the proxy.

Another problem with the models in this chapter is that there are several additional factors that would affect an individual's choice of whether or not to stay in the Marine Corps that are not included in this analysis. Some of these factors could be

measured, while others could not. The length of time the Marine has been deployed and if the Marine has any "special needs" dependents are examples of data that could be measured and compiled for future studies to help explain retention.

Examples of cases where other factors are likely to affect retention, but would be very difficult to measure, are individuals who entered the Marine Corps for patriotic reasons and who never intended to stay past the initial contract, or individuals who have family factors such as elderly or sick parents and, who therefore depart the military to move back home.

The findings of this chapter indicate that officers who graduate in the top third of TBS and who are accessed through MECEP have higher retention than other officers. In addition, the results of the effects of an individual's ability to exercise his/her personal preference of job selection on Marine Corps officer retention are inconclusive. Although, these effects were inconclusive, their inclusion provided a useful insight that the effect of TBS class standing on retention is not linear, but primarily focused in the bottom sixth of the class.

## **F. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Summary**

This chapter attempts to evaluate the effects of the success of MOS selection on retention at the seven-year point of commissioned service of Marine Corps officers. Prior studies have ignored the effect of whether or not officers received one of their MOS preferences on retention rates. The primary innovation of this study was the inclusion of a variable that attempted to measure the success of MOS selection and the introduction of a new concept of 'preference driven performance' that has not been measured previously.

The study used the MCCOAC data file focusing on officers who are not aviators or lawyers and who were commissioned between 1986 and 1992. The study primarily used logistic regression in determining the impact of the success of MOS selection on retention.

## **2. Conclusions**

The results of the logistic regression show that the effect of officers receiving one of their MOS preferences on retention to the seven-year point are relatively similar. The results showed that there was not a large difference in retention rates among the officers in the top half of the middle and bottom thirds.

Also, the results showed that there was a negative 13.8 percentage points effect on retention to the seven-year point for the bottom half of the bottom third of TBS class standing when compared to the top half of the middle third of class standing. These two results are promising in supporting the idea that success in MOS selection may have an effect on retention, but no precise conclusions may be drawn from these results.

This lack of support for the hypothesis could be caused by several factors, such as: selection of an inaccurate proxy to determine MOS preference success; officers may have imperfect information in regards to MOS selection; or officers may be more interested in being Marines than they are about their specific MOS.

This outcome is also relevant to the satisfaction-productivity controversy discussed in the literature review in that USMC officers have not get their job of preference; however, they may be motivated to perform (measured by retention) by good leadership and development opportunities. The results also indicate that there must be a wide range of other reward factors that motivate the USMC officers to stay in the service.

## **3. Recommendations**

There are several limitations to the analysis discussed in this chapter. It is recommended that future studies attempt to acquire the TBS data from 1999 to present. If the trend of the inclusion of MOS preferences continued after 1999, then the primary weaknesses of this study could be overcome by using the direct data of MOS preferences rather than using a proxy.

An additional limitation is that there are several factors that were not included in the model that would affect an individual's choice of whether or not to stay in the Marine Corps. It is recommended that policymakers attempt to ensure that TBS students have access to detailed information about the different MOSs to allow students to make well informed decisions about their MOS selection.



### III. AN ANALYSIS OF USMC FITREP COMPETENCY SCORES

#### A. BACKGROUND

Guidance for the USMC assignment process is provided by the United States Marine Corps (USMC) Marine Corps Promotion Manual, Volume 1, Officer Promotions (MARCORPROMMAN). In summary, “the boards are composed of officers of at least one pay grade senior to the officers being considered, and represent all occupational fields and commands from all geographic regions” (Long, 1992, 4). “The Defense Officer Personnel Management Act of 1980 (DOPMA) establishes a standard for career progression and an officer management system built around a uniform application of how military officers should be trained, appointed, promoted, separated, and retired” (Levent, 2003, 19). The USMC complies with this direction through the guidance of the *Marine Corps Promotion Manual* (MARCORPROMMAN) which provides the following executive summary:

Officers are selected for promotion for their potential to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the next higher grade based upon past performance as indicated in their official military personnel file. Promotions should not be considered a reward for past performance, but as incentive to excel in the next higher grade.

This Manual is designed to provide detailed information on all aspects of the officer promotion system. The information contained herein is applicable to active-duty list and Reserve active-status list officers. In the event this Manual contradicts higher authority guidance, the latter supersedes this Manual.

The MARCORPROMMAN provides the process and authorities for USMC selection for Warrant Officer, W1, to General, O-10. The USMC *Official Military Personnel File* (OMPF) provides all the information necessary for the selection board. The selection board is “not revealed until the boards are convened” (Long, 1992, 4). The OMPF contains all the information about a USMC officer. According to Long, “there are three parts to this file: fitness reports, commendatory or derogatory material, and miscellaneous administrative material” (1992, 5). “Files also include a recent photograph of the individual, which is used to evaluate military bearing” (Ergun, 2003, 21).

Ergun refers to other instructions that influence officer promotion:

- Secretary of Navy Instruction 1420.1A, 1991 (SECNAVINST 1420.1A). “Precepts include information that the SECNAV deems important for selection of officers to the next grade, but should not convey information on particular officers” (Ergun, 2003, 22).
- Department of Defense Instruction 1320.14, 1996 (DODINST 1320.14).

“Appropriate consideration is given to joint officer management and minority status issues” (Ergun, 2003, 22). Ergun continues:

An exception to excluding information on particular officers is the inclusion of ‘skill guidance’ in the precepts. The Marine Corps Promotion Manual defines a skill shortage as “any MOS that is 85 percent or less of the staffing goal for the grade being considered for selection (2003, 22).

“Instructions about the composition and proceedings of each promotion board are released by ‘precept’ which constitutes the legal document ordering a selection board to convene” (Ergun, 2003, 21).

To protect the board from inappropriate influence or persuasion, “the precept is not released until the Board actually convenes” (Ergun, 2003, 22).<sup>2</sup> Precepts also establish equal employment opportunity guidelines in accordance with the Department of Defense Directive 1320.12.

One of the criteria for selection is analysis of the performance of the USMC officers’ FITREP reports (at Annex A). Fitness reports are the annual reporting tool of the USMC. The guidelines for reporting and administration of the USMC fitness reports is provided by the USMC *Performance Evaluation System* (PES).

The scope of the PES “defines performance evaluation authority and responsibilities and contains instructions for the preparation, submission, and processing of Marine Corps fitness reports” (PES, 1998, v). The PES is the “primary means for evaluating a Marine’s performance to support the Commandant’s effort to select the best qualified personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command and duty assignments” (MCO 1670.7E, 1998).

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<sup>2</sup> This directive is given in MCO 1400.31B, 2000)

“A RAND report titled, *Minority and Gender Differences in Officer Career Progression*, provides the following summary of the USMC FITREP regime (Hosek et al, 2001, 115).

Like the Navy, Marine Corps performance evaluations are also referred to as FITREPs. There are four types of Marine Corps FITREPs: regular, concurrent, academic, and special. Regular reports are given semiannually and also whenever the officer is detached, changes duty, or is promoted, and whenever the officer’s reporting senior changes. Concurrent and special reports serve the same purposes as they do in the Navy. The immediate commanding officer or head of the staff section generally serves as the officer’s evaluator, or reporting senior.

The reporting senior grades the officer on performance (regular and additional duties, handling of officers, handling of enlisted personnel, training personnel, tactical handling of troops) and qualities (endurance, personal appearance, military presence, attention to duty, cooperation, initiative, judgment, presence of mind, force, leadership, loyalty, personal relations, economy of management, and growth potential).

Grades range from below average to outstanding; reporting seniors may assign a “not observed” score for any category in which the reporting senior feels his or her observation has been limited. The FITREP also asks the reporting senior to express his or her willingness “to have this Marine under your command . . . considering the requirements of *service in war*” (emphasis added) and asks for an indication of commendatory, adverse, or disciplinary action to which the officer was subject. A narrative section instructs the reporting senior to appraise the officer’s professionalism.

Finally, a reviewing officer, typically the reporting senior’s commanding officer, reviews the FITREP; he or she certifies that he or she either has had no opportunity to observe the officer or concurs/does not concur with the reporting senior’s ranking and evaluation of the officer. A new ranking is given if there is nonconcurrence with the ranking given by the reporting senior. The reviewing officer is asked to state the ranking of the officer relative to all officers of similar rank whom he or she reviews. The reviewing officer may add narrative remarks; such remarks are required if a *do not concur* is given (Hosek et al, 2001, 115).

This study will look at all four of the USMC FITREPS described in the first paragraph above..

## **B. THE USMC FITREP**

**Definition.** The purpose of the FITREP is to provide historical data on an officer's performance to assess his or her potential for promotion. The MARCORPROMMAN provides the following guidance: "Officers are selected for promotion for their potential to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the next higher grade based upon past performance as indicated in their official military personnel file."

The following performance criterion are used on the FITREP by the USMC to assist with assessing performance (USMC FITREP). (The USMC describes these qualities as "attributes"; however, in step with contemporary adult learning theories they are more appropriately described as "competencies").

**Performance.** Results achieved during the reporting period. How well those duties inherent to a Marine's billet, plus all additional duties, formally and informally assigned, were carried out. Reflects a Marine's aptitude, competence, and commitment to the unit's success above personal reward. Indicators are time and resource management, task prioritization, and tenacity to achieve positive ends consistently.

**Proficiency.** Demonstrates technical knowledge and practical skill in the execution of the Marine's overall duties. Combines training, education and experience. Translates skills into actions which contribute to accomplishing tasks and missions. Imparts knowledge to others. Grade dependent.

**Courage.** Moral or physical strength to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Personal acceptance of responsibility and accountability, placing conscience over competing interests regardless of consequences. Conscious, overriding decision to risk bodily harm or death to accomplish the mission or save others. The will to persevere despite uncertainty.

**Effectiveness Under Stress.** Thinking, functioning and leading effectively under conditions of physical and/or mental pressure. Maintaining composure appropriate for the situation, while displaying steady purpose of action, enabling one to inspire others while continuing to lead under adverse conditions. Physical and emotional strength, resilience and endurance are elements.

**Initiative.** Action in the absence of specific direction. Seeing what needs to be done and acting without prompting. The instinct to begin a task and follow through energetically on one's own accord. Being creative, proactive and decisive. Transforming opportunity into action.

**Leading Subordinates.** The inseparable relationship between leader and led. The application of leadership principles to provide direction and motivate subordinates. Using authority, persuasion and personality to influence subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Sustaining motivation and morale while maximizing subordinates' performance.

**Developing Subordinates.** Commitment to train, educate, and challenge all Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates. Developing team players and esprit de corps. Ability to combine teaching and coaching. Creating an atmosphere tolerant of mistakes in the course of learning.

**Setting the Example.** The most visible facet of leadership: how well a Marine serves as a role model for all others. Personal action demonstrates the highest standards of conduct, ethical behavior, fitness, and appearance. Bearing, demeanor, and self-discipline are elements.

**Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates.** Genuine interest in the well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on unit mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care of their own.

**Communications Skills.** The efficient transmission and receipt of thoughts and ideas that enable and enhance leadership. Equal importance given to listening, speaking, writing, and critical reading skills. Interactive, allowing one to perceive problems and situations, provide concise guidance, and express complex ideas in a form easily understood by everyone. Allows subordinates to ask questions, raise issues, and concerns and venture opinions. Contributes to a leader's ability to motivate as well as counsel.<sup>3</sup>

**Professional Military Education (PME).** Commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Marine Corps. Increases the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude. Resources include resident schools; professional qualifications and certification processes; nonresident and other extension courses; civilian educational institution coursework; a personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Commandant's Reading List; participating in discussion groups and military societies; and involvement in learning through new technologies.

**Decision Making Ability.** Viable and timely problem solution. Contributing elements are judgment and decisiveness. Decisions reflect

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<sup>3</sup> The MCO 1610.12 *USMC Counseling Program* is dated 22 July 1986.

the balance between an optimal solution and a satisfactory, workable solution that generates tempo. Decisions are made within the context of the commander's established intent and the goal of mission accomplishment. Anticipation, mental agility, intuition, and success are inherent.

**Judgment.** The discretionary aspect of decision making. Draws on core values, knowledge, and personal experience to make wise choices. Comprehends the consequences of contemplated courses of action.

**Evaluations.** The extent to which this officer serving as a reporting official conducted, or required others to conduct, accurate, uninflated, and timely evaluations.

“Table 10 shows the DOPMA promotion opportunity - the cumulative opportunity for advancement for those who compete for promotion to the next higher grade—for each grade and the promotion window that the authors of DOPMA believed would attract and retain the required number of officers” (Rostker et al, 1993, 13).

Table 10. DOPMA Model of Officer Careers

Grade	Promotion Opportunity <sup>a</sup> (% promoted)	Promotion Timing (YOS)	Career Expectation	Cumulative Probability to Grade from Original Cohort (Includes attrition)
O-2	100 % if fully qualified	2,0	2 x nonselect & separation	96%
O-3	95 %	3,5/4	2 x nonselect & separation or may be allowed to stay on active duty until retirement at 20 YOS	82 %
O-4	80%	10±1	2 x nonselect & separation or may be allowed to stay until 24 YOS; normal retirement at 20 YOS.	66%
O-5	70%	16±1	30% of 2X nonselectees can be retired before normal (28 YOS) retirement.	41%
O-6	50%	22±1	Normal retirement at 30 YOS, but 30% early retirement possible after 4 years in grade. <sup>b</sup>	18%

<sup>a</sup>. “The promotion opportunity is usually a percentage based on the in zone population. The following equation is used to determine selection opportunity” (MCO P1400.31B, 2001, 1-5).

$$\text{Promotion Opportunity} = \left( \frac{\# \text{ of officers authorized to be selected}}{\# \text{ of officers in the in-zone}} \right)$$

<sup>b</sup>. Both O-5 and O-6 could experience a more than 30 percent early retirement if considered more than once prior to reaching mandatory retirement.

Source: Rostker et al., 1993, 14.

## C. LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

### 1. Overview

Harkins describes three things that successful leaders are always doing in their conversations: “(1) advancing their agendas; (2) sharing learning; and (3) strengthening relationships” (1999, xiii). Successful military leaders from the beginning of history have understood these tenets for success. Over the last ten years, the nature of war has changed dramatically. The complex nature of Military Operations Other Than Conventional War (MOOTCW) and Network Centric Warfare (NCW) places military officers under increasingly sophisticated technical and communicative pressures. Ethical impositions occur at every level of soldiering. We cannot discount the contribution of human relationships to the ‘will to fight’ – one of three major elements of combat power. The battle-space environment is centered on ‘4CSIR’, an acronym that describes command, control, communication, computers, surveillance, intelligence and reconnaissance.

For the success of all these elements, military leaders must understand the interrelationships between these elements and, ultimately, how people coordinate these elements through communication to bring success in the battle-space environment. More than ever before, military leaders must demonstrate a sophisticated level of intelligence, but must also be at home in the bureaucratic system.<sup>4</sup> Military leaders are required to know how to clearly communicate their intent, and to forge people together to provide military power. Communication is one of the performance criteria on the USMC FITREP. Therefore, we may expect that as USMC officers progress up the chain of command, there will be an improvement in their assessed communication skills. The purpose of this preamble is to demonstrate that the relative importance of performance criteria may change with MOS and rank.

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<sup>4</sup> This was a quote made by the Australian Chief of Army, LTGEN Coates on or about 1991 in a *Time Magazine* interview. Author is unable to reference, but recalls theme of the interview.

The leadership pipeline outlines major transitions in the life of a manager. The promotion process should be cognisant of these transitions. The concept of the leadership pipeline is important with relation to identifying suitable promotion criteria because it states that the skills required by leaders change as they progress through the chain of command in military service. The model clearly defines the changing responsibilities of leaders and managers as they progress through the chain of command.

Figure 2 provides a suitable framework for discussion about organizational systems (Simon, 2004). Contemporary organizational behavior defines a manager (indicated by the blue continuous line) as someone who concerns themselves with the ‘operations’ of an organization; the people, tasks, technologies, and other elements that provide ‘capability’ for the organization.

Leaders understand these responsibilities, but provide the interpretation and interface between internal elements of the organization - and the external influences (indicated by the red broken line). Leaders provide vision and direction. The USMC prides itself on providing leadership and places considerable institutional importance on this competency.

For the context of this report, we will allow the two expressions, *Manager* and *Leader*, to hold the same meaning and interpretation.



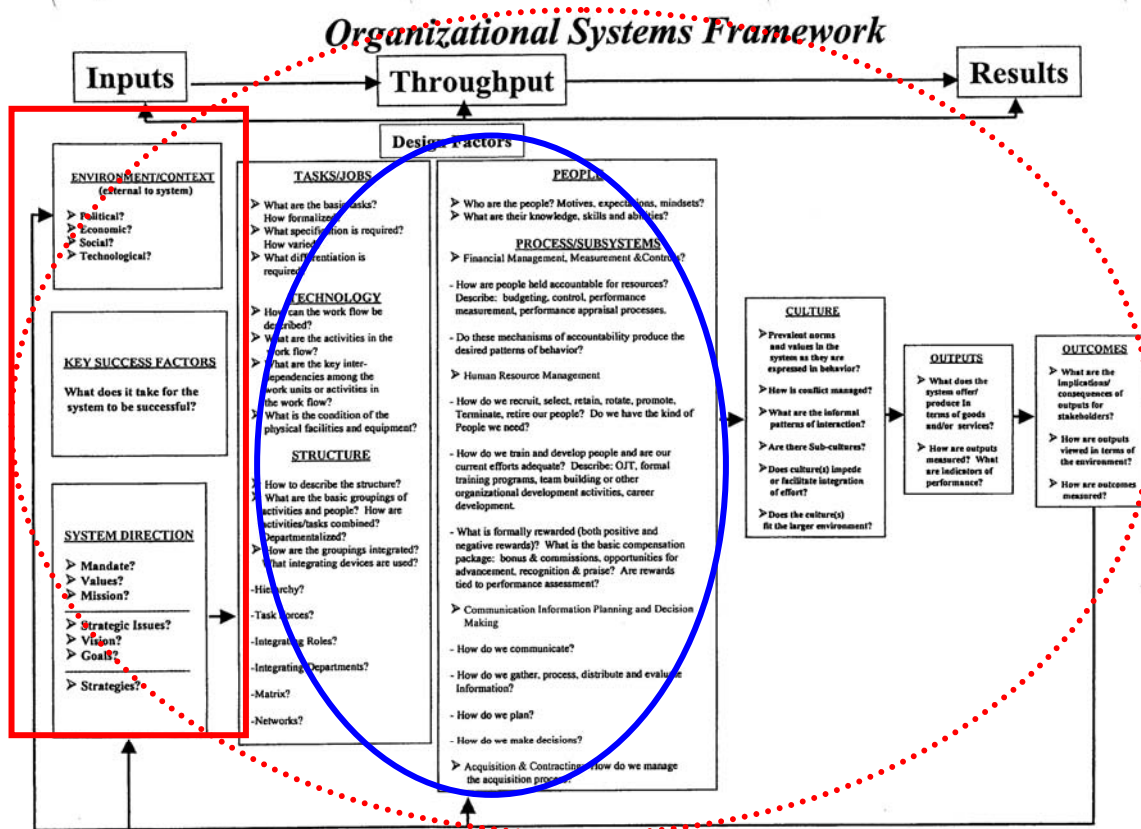



Figure 2. Organizational Systems Framework

The leadership pipeline studies the evolution of skills, time applications, and values as successful leaders progress through stations of increasing responsibility and awareness. The levels are summarized below (Charan et al, 2001, 15-26). They demonstrate that leaders transition from basic, cognitive, task-related work skills - to more sophisticated, affective, valuing, interpretive skills. The transition of these skills should be reflected in the promotion process. Skills, and the application thereof, are acquired and delivered in different styles and techniques.

Some of these learning styles are defined below:

Style		Description
Cognitive	☞	having a basis in factual or empirical learning.
Affective	☞	decision-making with emotions.
Heuristic	☞	learning takes place through experience.

Trait  of a person's character – possible genetic, but also learned.

These styles have been applied to the varied competencies of the USMC FITREP. This categorisation is highly subjective and is based on the authors' experience and learning only. Each competency has been matched with a style that, according to the authors' opinion, is most important in determining the success of the specified competency. Using the leadership pipeline model, it may be argued that the affective and heuristic skills become more important as leaders progress through more senior positions in an organization.

Table 11. FITREP Competencies Matched with Learning Systems

<b>Performance</b>	<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Setting the Example</b>	<b>Trait</b>
<b>Proficiency</b>	Cognitive	<b>Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates</b>	Affective
<b>Courage</b>	Trait	<b>Communications Skills</b>	Affective
<b>Effectiveness Under Stress</b>	Trait	<b>Professional Military Education</b>	Cognitive
<b>Initiative</b>	Heuristic	<b>Decision Making Ability</b>	Heuristic
<b>Leading Subordinates</b>	Heuristic	<b>Judgment</b>	Heuristic
<b>Developing Subordinates</b>	Affective	<b>Evaluations</b>	Heuristic

Source: Authors

This analysis will attempt to identify any changes in reporting scores through the chain of command that reflect this transition. If such changes exist, then it may be appropriate to reflect the changing requirements in the promotion system.

## 2. Passages

A summary of the leadership passages is simplified in the following paragraphs (Charan et al, 2001, 15-26).

### Level 1: Managing Yourself

(Other Rank)

This level is characterized by individual skills of either a technical or professional level. Individuals complete the assigned work on time, and to job standards. Individuals organize their own time to complete the task and start learning to accept the military culture. The skills developed at this level are appropriate to the trade or profession that is delivered.

Learning to collaborate with others is one skill that is developed that will lead to more responsibility. These are mostly younger people who may have just entered the military. At this point, the individual is at leadership passage number one – moving from Managing Self to Managing Others.

**Level 2: Managing Others** (Platoon Commander)

This level is characterized by shifting from doing work to getting work done through others. Leaders at this level allocate their time in order to get their work done, as well as help others to get their work done. Skills at this level include assigning tasks, mentoring, job appraisal, and monitoring. This is described as the most difficult part of the transition between level one and two. People must also learn to value managerial work, rather than just accepting it involuntarily. They must understand that allocating time for others, planning, coaching, motivating, and making others productive is now their job.

**Level 3: Managing Managers** (Company Commander)

This level is characterized by the understanding that you are now primarily engaged in management activities. Now leaders must remove themselves from particular concern about individual tasks. Responsibilities at this level include; (1) selecting people to turn passage one and become managers, (2) allocating tasks and projects to lower managers, (3) measuring those managers performance, (4) additional coaching and, (5) starting to think beyond their function and concerning themselves with strategic issues that support the overall business/military plan.

Once you've demonstrated your proficiency at managing other managers it is time to go through leadership passage number three and become a Functional Manager.

**Level 4: Functional Manager** (Battalion Commander)

This level is characterized by an increased managerial maturity and understanding that you will now be managing areas outside those that you are familiar with. Managers at this turn will lead departments/units that consist of a wide range of disciplines within their function. If you were a Company Commander – you now head the whole battalion, comprised of many different functions. This requires skill, stronger value appreciation, and time application changes. The functional leader must still understand what is happening in every direction in the organization. This requires the leader to communicate laterally, upwards, and through two layers of management below. The functional manager must also become skilled at developing long-term strategy that will blend the functional area into the overall business/operational plan.

The key here is to be able to value those other areas in the functional domain that you are not familiar with. More time is spent in meetings and

conferences, leaving less time on functional responsibilities; therefore, the functional leader must be able to delegate responsibility for overseeing many functional tasks to subordinates. This requires the ability to coordinate complex multi-disciplinary functions. This becomes more difficult with subordinate commanders spread over a larger region. Figure 3 outlines the critical career passages in the organization (Thomas, 2004).

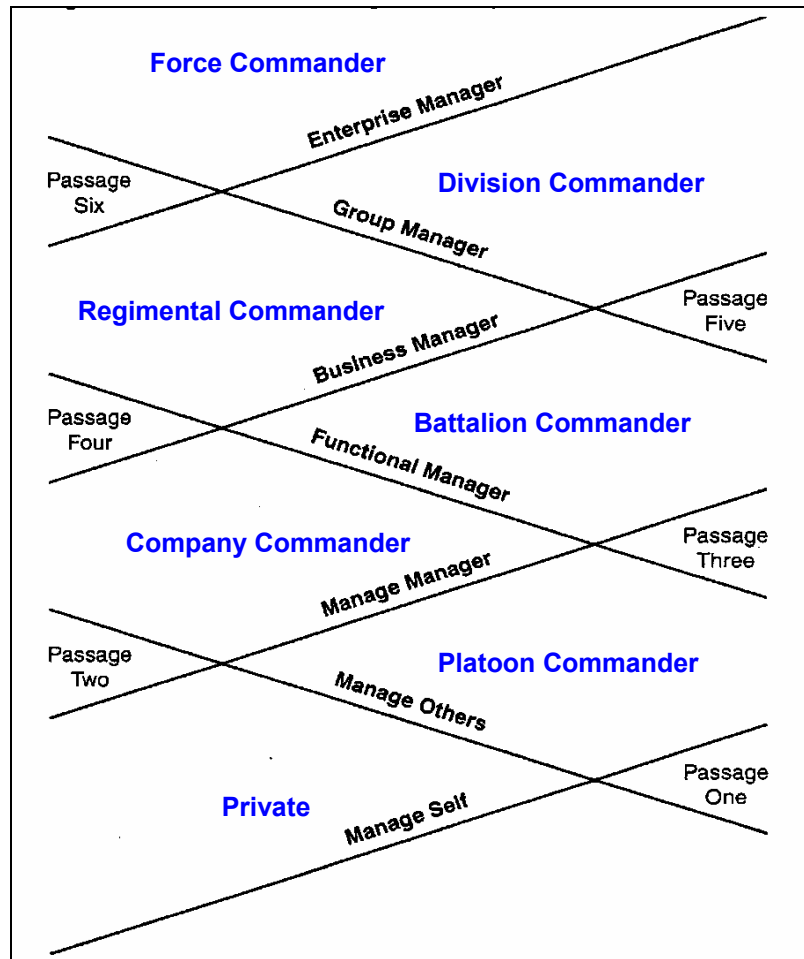


Figure 3. Critical Career Passages in a Large Business Organization

Note: Each passage represents a major change in job requirements that translates to new skill requirements, new time horizons and applications, and new work values (Charan, 1995, 7).

The functional leader is also required to provide quality control and improvement that “pushes” the organization into the future. They are looking towards “sustainable [competitive] advantage, rather than just an immediate but temporary edge” (Charan, 1994, p21) - the strategic mind. In this role, as previously stated, they must demonstrate a sophisticated level of intelligence, but also be at home in the bureaucratic system. Being able to communicate through all levels of command is extremely

important in maintaining an informed position of the condition of the organization/unit, as well as enable the functional leader to make decisions based as closely as possible on the facts. Their interpersonal communication skills have been well developed in previous positions.

Klauss and Bass conducted a study that found senior leaders spend approximately 80% of their time talking with others (1982, p3). This study spanned across a variety of organizational types and management levels. Therefore, we would expect to find that as USMC officers progress through the organization, their FITREP reports should reflect improving communication skills.

Senior ranks also provide a senior staff capacity for the business manager with respect to issues of high sensitivity – which often may have strategic consequences through ministerial or political involvement. Once this level has been mastered, it is time to go through leadership passage number four and become a Business Manager.

#### **Level 5: Business Manager** (Regimental Commander)

Integrating different functional areas of the organization is a strong characteristic of this level. The Business Leader has to make all the functional areas work together towards a profit perspective (or, in the military, a strategic advantage). The Business Leader continues to develop strategic thinking skills, and now becomes more sensitive to functional diversity within functions and among them.

The value of people in the organization becomes paramount, as technical and professional responsibilities must be totally devolved to the functional leaders. Strategic decisions are based on business reports and proposals (intelligence reports and situation reports) that are driven by the business/strategic plan. Strategic goals and decisions encompass the everyday parlance of communication at this level. The Business Leader has a sound understanding of the organization's headquarters and capabilities in order to make effective (choosing the right job) and efficient (using the right tools) decisions for the organization.

The Business Leader is comfortable devolving responsibility to human resources in all functions such as finance, production, marketing and a range of others. The military equivalent is the allocation of corps tasks. If you improve the balanced scorecard, carry the brigade through restructure, or liaise well with UN forces in Afghanistan - you are ready to become Group Manager.

#### **Level 6: Group Manager** (Divisional Commander)

This level is characterized by running more than one business. You must value the contribution of all businesses in the organization. If you do not

value the success of others you will not instill confidence in your Business Managers and, inevitably, one or more of the portfolios will fail.

You must put additional effort into coaching, mentoring, and motivating the Business Managers – the success of their businesses is your product. Charan gives four key skills to master here:

- (1) learning to evaluate strategy for capital allocation and deployment purposes in another's business;
- (2) learn to develop the business managers below you, as well as knowing which functional managers are ready to move up;
- (3) learn to evaluate if your group has the right mix of businesses (what mix provides the best portfolio for long-term success; and
- (4) learn to assess if your group has the right core capabilities to succeed (2001, p24).

#### **Level 7: Enterprise Manager**

(Force Commander)

Also known as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). As the old adage goes: 'The buck stops here.' The CEO is expected to make two to three key decisions each year. The Enterprise Leader runs a portfolio of groups (Divisions) that may consist of dozens of subsidiaries (Regiments) below one holding company.

The CEO makes the final decisions on policies and corporate strategy that integrates all the business portfolios. This level is more focused on values than skills. Skills should have been very well developed in order to make the critical trade-offs in capability. CEOs are visionary thinkers with the will and management skills to facilitate long-term goals. They must value being a long-term, visionary thinker, but at the same time develop the operating mechanisms to track and drive quarterly performance in order to make sure your company is still around to get to the long-term objectives.

A critical skill is being sensitive to external influences and being able to guide the company through these challenges proactively instead of reactively. This sixth sense is something that is often ascribed to great leaders. Haran also suggests that a "letting go" process needs to occur during this level. CEOs need to let go of the pieces of their company (the products, services, and businesses) and focus on the entity as a whole. This probably fits in with what characterizes this level best.

The skill of being able to know who to pick to be on your inner-circle corporate team fits in here. Knowing what to value leads the CEO to picking the right people. Ultimately, this skill increases ability to use time efficiently. Choosing the right direct reports frees you up to be visionary. It ensures you have the time to analyze and understand the entire

environment surrounding the three to four critical decisions you will have to make for the company each year.

### **3. Summary**

Varied metaphors have been exchanged throughout these levels to present a military equivalent. Any leader in the military will readily identify parallels with their level of responsibility. The characteristics of these levels will be explored in the following analyses. The leadership pipeline clearly demarcates levels of responsibility and changing skills as employees progress through the chain of command; and it is for this reason it is adopted for this study.

### **D. THE FUTURE MILITARY LEADER**

One of the salient differences between a government department and the private sector is their relationships with their environment. “Companies try to impose themselves on their environments, rather than merely adapt to them” (Heath, 1994, 228). The role of defense is primarily in service to their environment. The USMC does not have to compete under the same market influences. The USMC has to operate within the same environment; however, it does not ‘market’ its products and services to the public, as private companies are required to do in order to maximize shareholder’s wealth.

Neither does the USMC have to foist competitive advantages to influence market needs and wants. The USMC is an instrument of government. Therefore, it carries a different set of strategic goals and responsibilities. The USMC is required to present a responsive and capable image to the public. Taxpayer’s money funds the department and, consequently, sensitivities are considered - but differently to commercial enterprises. Every citizen of the country is a stakeholder in the USMC – like it, or not. The public benefit that the USMC provides to the nation means that whether people choose to receive it or not – they benefit from the capability.

Therefore, as an institution that reflects societal expectations and demands, the USMC must be particularly conscious of the image it portrays to its stakeholders – specifically, the public. “If disharmony occurs between organizations and their external

stakeholders, the result may be a loss of business or increased effort to force companies to act according to ethical standards the stakeholders prefer” (Heath, 1994, p253).

This preamble is very important when analyzing the leadership abilities of a senior officer in the USMC. Situational factors weigh heavily on the public image and, consequently, the military leader must have an almost instinctive propensity to identify the appropriate message. Shockley-Zalabak describes public affairs and issues management as “shaping of public opinion regarding social and political issues important to an organization” (1998, p362).

If these types of issues are not handled correctly through an appropriate communication strategy, the organization can find itself in a protracted issues matter that may involve ministerial investigations with strategic consequences. Therefore, the manner in which the military leader communicates these issues to stakeholders, such as parents, other government departments, and the external public, must be well considered and conscious of public opinion and sway.

The leadership pipeline has been described to provide a context for leadership development in the USMC. Although the USMC is a closed personnel system in that personnel are selected and grown within the organization; the same principles of leadership apply and we can expect that as USMC officers progress through the ranks that their key skills will evolve to meet the changing requirements of senior leadership. Namely, a transition of skills from cognitive and affective requirements – to heuristic application.

## **E. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

The people process is more important than either the strategy or operations processes. After all, it’s the people of an organization who make judgments about how markets are changing, create strategies based on those judgments, and translate the strategies into operational realities. To put it simply and starkly: If you don’t get the people process right, you will never fulfill the potential of your business (Bossidy & Charan, 2002, 141)

The PES Manual describes the FITREP as the “most important information component in manpower management” (USMC, 1998, 1-4). Manpower [personnel]



management is consequently not defined nor structured into the USMC strategic plan in the guidance provided by the PES manual. Therefore, it is appropriate to provide some discussion on manpower/personnel management. Bach and Sisson describe the study of personnel management as being “at the crossroads of three traditions” (2000, 4). They are broadly described as:

**The prescriptive tradition.** This traditional approach within literature prescribes a range of so-called “best-practice” processes for all the elements of “people management” such as recruiting, appraisal, and training and development (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 4). The weakness of this approach is that it fails to recognize the increasing diversity of organizations and the limitations that universal prescriptions place upon successful people management in such an environment. Hoglin states that the selection criteria for promotion for the USMC have not changed since 1986 – a decade ago (2004, 65). Colloquial evidence from serving USMC officers suggests that the implemented changes were minor.

Rapidly changing war-fighting doctrine in the last 19 years would have most likely necessitated a review of current promotion/assignment processes to reflect new demands in the modern battle-space. Bach and Sisson refer to other studies by Grant (1991) and, Prahalad and Hamel (1990): “Especially important have been the growing links between personnel management and strategic management, especially how firms create and sustain competitive advantage, provided by the prominence of resource-based view of the firm articulated by the notion of core competencies” (2000, 5).

What the core competencies of the USMC and, how is the relationship defined in terms of the strategic plan? The process of identifying, nurturing, and sustaining core competencies is not an easy process (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 5); however, it is necessary in order to: (1) strengthen the human capital of the organization and, (2) provide validity for the promotion/assignment process.

**The labor process tradition.** Bach and Sisson describe the origins of this tradition as being “rooted in Marxist political economy” (2000, 6). “In contrast to the benevolent view of personnel management inherent in the prescriptive tradition, in which personnel specialists try to balance the interests of employees and managers, the labor

process tradition adopts a much more critical stance” (2000, 5). Different formalized forms of control are implemented to provide legitimacy for managerial objectives. Bach and Sisson describe three forms of management control:

1. “The increasing density and visibility of financial disciplines within organizations” (2000, 6). The bottom line portends a perpetual constraint in every decision made by USMC leaders at every level. The ability to manage these pecuniary limitations is neither discussed nor defined in promotion/assignment processes.
2. “Of increased importance is outsourcing in which managers contract out the ‘problem’ of management control to other organizations” (2000, 7). The advent of contracting of a wide range of products and services for the USMC provides another dimension for performance appraisal. In some public service departments these contracts are managed through some form of ‘performance, planning and review reports’ – that attempt to update decision-makers on contract progress and implementation. Does the management of these contracts fit within performance, proficiency, or some other competency? How much correlation exists across the attributed competencies for the appraised officer?
3. “With the emergence of HRM . . . [are] forms of cultural control (i.e. commitment), often intended to establish a new form of psychological contract in which employees exercise forms of self-control either individually or through forms of team-working” (2000, 7). The elements of this form of control are clearly visible in the USMC FITREP with “Setting the Example” and “Developing Subordinates”, with references to “military bearing”, “self-discipline” and others.

**The industrial relations tradition.** Bach and Sisson describe the industrial relations tradition as follows (2000, 9):

In contrast to most prescriptive accounts of personnel management, the industrial relations approach has viewed personnel management as part of a system of employment regulation in which internal and external influences shape the management of the employment relationship.

This shifts the emphasis away from a focus on the techniques of personnel management, within the organization, to a consideration of personnel practice, set within a wider historical, economic and social context.

Associated with the industrial relations tradition is “a strong emphasis on empirical enquiry” (2000, 9). To this end, the authors were unable to uncover any “detailed workplace investigation” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 7) conducted by the USMC on the legacy of successful leaders, nor the implications of new technologies on the promotion and/or assignment of officers. There is an assumed “straightforward relationship” (op cit) between the current FITREP within the promotion/assignment process, and the strategic success of the corps as a fighting organization.

## **F. A STRATEGIC FUNCTION**

Many texts and personnel managers acknowledge a transition in the concept of personnel management from an operating to a strategic function. Bach and Sisson note that writers “use the term ‘human resource planning’ in much the same way as earlier authors used ‘manpower planning’”. “For most, this name change does signal a significant difference in both thinking and practice in this field” (2000, 93).

Bach and Sisson also provide 27 points of difference between personnel management (as described by the USMC) and human resource management (HRM - is the contemporary concept of personnel management used by most large organizations today) that squarely reflect the differences presented in other HR texts. These differences are outlined in Table 12. Mostly, this transition approaches people management from a “resource-based view of the firm” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 93), and a “shift from performance appraisal to *performance management* is indicative of the emergence of a more strategic and integrated approach to personnel practice” (200, 241).

Table 12. Twenty-seven points of difference between personnel management and HRM

Dimension	Personnel and IR	HRM
<b>Beliefs and assumptions</b>		
1. Contract	Careful delineation of written contracts	Aim to go ‘beyond contract’
2. Rules	Importance of devising clear rules/mutuality	‘Can-do’ outlook; impatience with ‘rules’
3. Guide to management action	Procedures	‘Business need’
4. Behaviour referent	Norms/custom and practice	Values/mission
5. Managerial task vis-à-vis labour	Monitoring	Nurturing
6. Nature of relations	Pluralist	Unitarist
7. Conflict	Institutionalized	De-emphasized
<b>Strategic aspects</b>		
8. Key relations	Labour management	Customer
9. Initiatives	Piecemeal	Integrated
10. Corporate plan	Marginal to	Central to
11. Speed of decision	Slow	Fast
<b>Line management</b>		
12. Management role	Transactional	Transformational leadership
13. Key managers	Personnel/IR specialists	General/business/line managers
14. Communication	Indirect	Direct
15. Standardization	High (e.g. ‘parity’ an issue)	Low (e.g. ‘parity’ not seen as relevant)
16. Prized management skills	Negotiation	Facilitation
<b>Key levers</b>		
17. Selection	Separate, marginal task	Integrated, key task
18. Pay	Job evaluation (fixed grades)	Performance related
19. Conditions	Separately negotiated	Harmonization
20. Labour management	Collective bargaining contracts	Towards individual contracts
21. Thrust of relations with stewards	Regularized through facilities and training	Marginalized (with exception of some bargaining for change models)
22. Job categories and grades	Many	Few
23. Communication	Restricted flow	Increased flow
24. Job design	Division of labour	Teamwork
25. Conflict handling	Reach temporary truces	Manage climate and culture
26. Training and development	Controlled access to courses	Learning companies
27. Foci of attention for interventions	Personnel procedures	Wide-ranging cultural, structural and personnel strategies

Source: Bach and Sisson (2000, 12)

Mostly, the evolution of personnel management to HRM is about the “emphasis on pursuing a strategic approach to the management of human resources, developed with

the full backing of senior management, embracing a tight coupling between human resources and business policy and a coherent of integrated set of personnel policies and practices” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 11). With regards to the strategic business model, links should be established between the “effective management of people and competitiveness” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 15). “Competitiveness”, in military parlance, can be translated into capability or readiness that should include, but go beyond “faces” and “places”. It is important that the selection of performance criteria be linked with the strategic goals and capability of the USMC.

What are the core competencies of the USMC, and how are they reflected in personnel policies and procedures? Bach and Sisson ask, “Corporate Strategy and Human Resource Plans – Push, Pull or Fit?” (2000, 98). Bach and Sisson also refer to a study by Fletcher and Williams who note that there is “an absence, in most organizations of an over-arching strategic rationale for the introduction of performance management” (2000, 244). Armstrong and Baron (1998) provide the following table that summarizes the developments in performance management since 1991.

Table 13. Developments in Performance Management since 1991

<i><b>FROM</b></i>	<i><b>TO</b></i>
System	Process
Appraisal	Joint Review
Outputs	Outputs/Inputs
PRP	Development
Ratings Common	Less Rating
Top Down	360-degree feedback
Directive	Supportive
Monolithic	Flexible
Owned by HR	Owned by users

Source: Bach and Sisson (2000, 260)

Bach and Sisson note, “more importantly, an organization may well be operating more than one employment system – typically in relation to different types of employee” (2000, 102). The way that managers are able to actually articulate that employment strategy, and whether they are flexible in the same way the organizational strategy is – will, in part, determine the answer to the push, pull, or fit question.

The USMC employs the same promotion/assignment strategy for all positions. There is no distinguishable differences for promotion/assignment processes across MOSs, or through the field grade officer ranks; therefore, it may be argued that the USMC HR strategy is neither push, nor pull, and is, at best, a ‘plugging holes’ approach (the big holes are determined by the undermanned MOS outlined in the precept) that cannot be articulated in strategic terms aside from “number crunching” efforts to fill positions.

Without an understanding of a firm as an employment system, human resource practices and HRM cannot be considered as strategic (Hendry, 1995, 227).

These employment systems show how choices made over a wide range of issues come together to provide distinct, coherent approaches to managing labor in different circumstances. The starting point for the development of these employment systems is the distinction between internal and external labor markets (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 100).

Ferris, Rowland and Buckley provide a three dimensional matrix (Figure 4) to illustrate the framework that provides managers with “fewer objective, quantifiable ways to assess performance” (1990, 21). The three dimensions are:

**Overall Organizational Strategy.** Represented by the vertical axis. This may be a single strategy, or a combination of strategies.

**HRM.** Represented by the horizontal axis. This axis identifies the range of “personnel activities related to managing employees” (Ferris et al, 1990, 22).

**Organizational Outcomes.** How well does the organization meet the goals established in the organizational strategy? How does the USMC measure this performance standard?

Ferris, et al., also suggest a fourth element: the level of employee. This plane relates to the “specific job descriptions” throughout the organization (1990, 22). Figure 4 summarizes how the HRM plan should link with organizational strategy and outcomes. The HRM practices should provide throughput for the USMC organizational strategy in achieving the USMC mission. Nearly every organizational management text recommends close alignment of organizational practices. To this end, the goals of the HRM plan must be clearly linked to organizational strategy.

The cover of the USMC Strategy 21 is titled with a caption provided by General J.L. Jones, “For the strength of the Corps is the Marine and the strength of the Marine is

the Corps” (USMC Strategy, 2000). This observation demonstrates an acknowledgment that the Corps leans upon the strength of the Marine; however, the corollary may be more ambiguous. Does the Marine lean upon the strength of the Corps – when the Corps is the Marines?

Source: Ferris, Rowland, Buckley, 1990, 21

The ‘will to fight’ is an element of combat, and it is supported by all the other factors of the organization. If the Marine is the strength of the Corps, then we should expect that the HRM plan is an engaging, very integral, and easily identifiable part of the Corps strategy.

When you clarify competencies, your entire organization knows how to support your competitive advantage – and readily allocates resources to build cross-unit technological and production links (Prahalad & Hamel, 2003, 1).

The message of Prahalad and Hamel is that if the entire organization does not recognize the advantage of the identified core competence, then there are two possible things happening: (1) it is not a core competence or, (2) it is not being supported appropriately.

The USMC HRM plan should be linked to the core competencies of the Corps. The core competencies are described as follows (USMC Strategy 21):

- Ready to fight and win
- Expeditionary culture
- Combined arms operations
- Task organized
- Reserve integration expertise
- Forcible entry from the sea
- Marines are naval in character
- Joint competency

Directly, none of these competencies are reflected in the FITREP guidance. A logic or competence diagram may assist in determining the links between those competencies appraised on the FITREP - and the core competencies of the strategic plan as outlined in Figure 5.



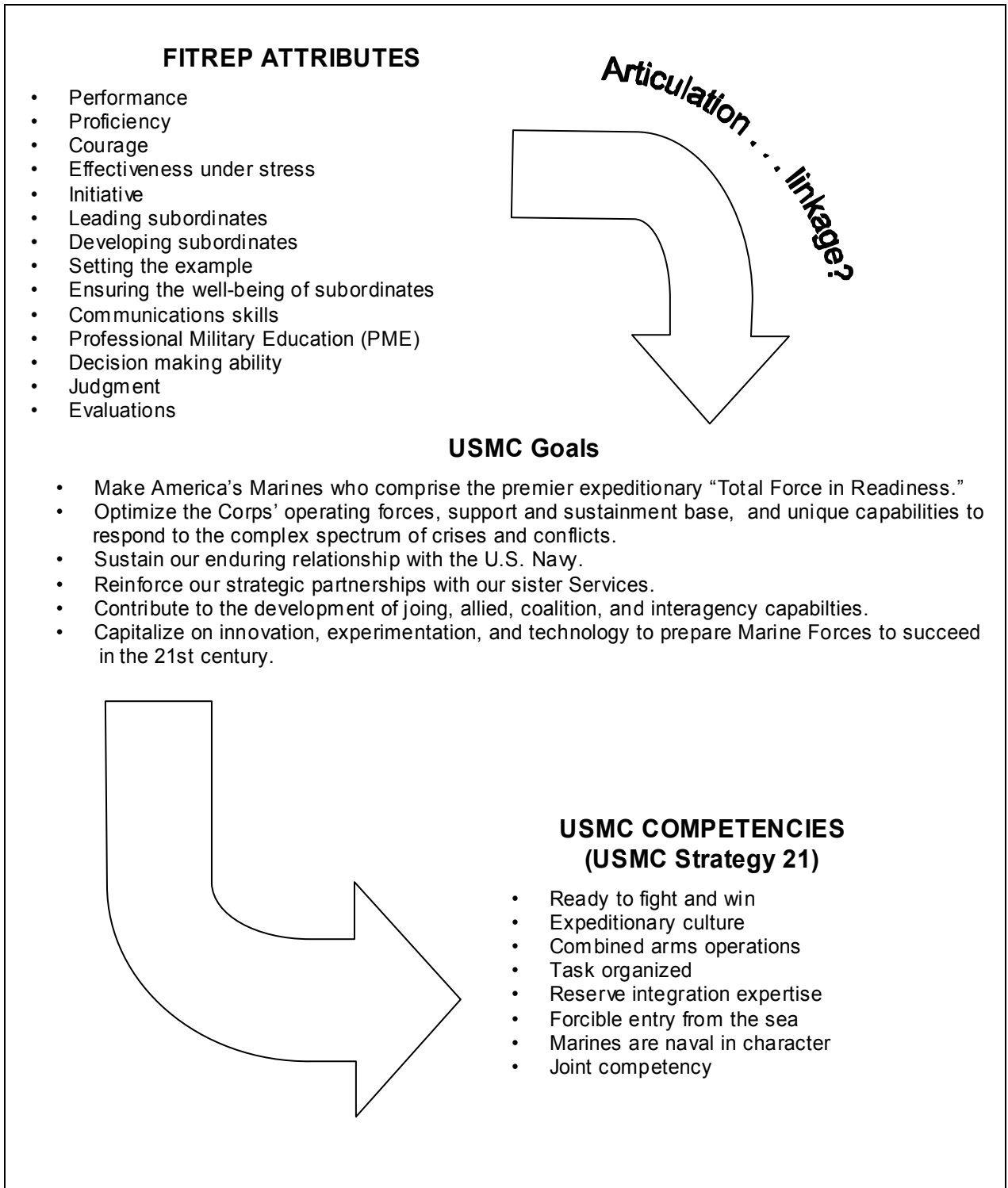


Figure 5. Expected Articulation of the USMC FITREP Competencies into the USMC Strategy

Objectives support strategy - and goals should support objectives. The USMC goals are designed around the philosophy of maneuver warfare with a stated “end-state”, “ways”, and “how”, and are defined by the USMC as follows (USMC Strategy 21):

- Make America’s Marines who comprise the premier expeditionary “Total Force in Readiness.”
- Optimize the Corps’ operating forces, support and Sustainment base, and unique capabilities to respond to the complex spectrum of crises and conflicts.
- Capitalize on innovation, experimentation, and technology to prepare Marine Forces to succeed in the 21st century.

Each of these goals are supported by a wide range of aims. The plans to achieve these aims, and how they are to be measured - are not espoused in Strategy 21. Suffice to say that however the USMC plans towards these aims, Prahalad and Hamel say that organizations should “gather managers to identify next-generation competences” (2003, 1). Porter tells us that “the essence of strategy is choosing to perform activities differently than rivals do” (1996, 64). This guidance may be applied to war-fighting ability, and it may be argued that the USMC appraisal system should provide some opportunity to identify future-thinkers, and men and women who are not necessarily socialized into institutional group-think norms, but able to “think outside the box” and provide more innovative and competitive ways of doing business [sic war-fighting], without compromising the core values of the organization. Some features of performance management are outlined in Table 14 below.

Table 14. Features of Performance Management

<i>FEATURE</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>	<i>USMC</i>
Objective setting and review	85	✓ e.g. interview process
Annual appraisal	83	✓
Personal Development Plans (PDPs)	68	✓ e.g. aviation qual. process
Self-appraisal	45	✗
Performance-related pay (PRP)	43	✗
Coaching/Mentoring	39	Some
Career Management	32	✓
Competence Assessment	3	Per FITREP only
Twice-yearly appraisal	24	Depends on rank
Subordinate (180-degree) feedback	20	✗
Continuous assessment	17	Training only
Rolling Appraisal	12	✗
360-degree feedback	11	✗
Peer appraisal	9	Training only
Balanced Scorecard	5	✗

Source: Bach and Sisson (2000, 260)

The USMC FITREP also provides an opportunity for reporting officers to provide an overall rating for performance that is based upon relative standing against peers. Armstrong and Baron (1998, 107) report that an Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD) sponsored survey showed that “the proportion of respondents who provided an overall rating for performance had fallen since 1991 from 64 to 54 per cent” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 244).

Linked to this trend, has been a modification to the exclusive focus on outputs and whether individual objectives have been met by incorporating consideration of inputs and how objectives are achieved. This change in emphasis is reflected in the increasing use of competences as part of the performance management process.

Second, organizations have broadened the establishment of individual and corporate objectives away from an almost exclusive focus on short-term financial targets towards a so-called ‘balanced scorecard’ of key results areas (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 245).

What is the ‘balanced scorecard’? Kaplan and Norton provide us with four characteristics that make the balanced scorecard “special” (1993, 133):

1. It is a top-down reflection of the company’s mission and strategy.
2. It is forward looking.
3. It integrates external and internal measures.

4. It helps focus you (by reaching agreement on measuring only those measures that are most critical to the success of the organization)

Much of the focus is on measurement of the corporate strategy. The Balanced Scorecard attempts to bring competencies into focus for the organization and then present them in a way that they can be managed and measured. The US Army launched an enterprise wide Balanced Scorecard in October 2001,

and then defined a whirlwind set of deadlines for implementing it. It dubbed the initiative the Strategic Readiness System (SRS) (Downing et al, 2003, 3).

In the Army's plan, "people" were defined as the "cornerstone of the force" and they were reflected as one of six strategic priorities:

- Core Competencies
- Readiness
- Transformation
- Sound Business Practices
- People
- Secure Resources

There are always a range of constraints within the internal and external labor markets that influence choice of organizational strategy and balanced scorecard - let alone HR strategy. "Although Armstrong and Baron (1998, 109) suggest that approaches to performance management have become more effective over the last decade, they still report that 37 per cent of their respondents viewed performance management as 'ineffective' or only 'slightly effective' in improving organizational performance" (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 245).

One of the immediately obvious constraints for the USMC is scale. With 18,000 officers steadily progressing through various training, experiential, and developmental milestones – a 'factory' style promotion/assignment process allows continual throughput. To this approach, Bach and Sisson note that "the concern is no longer simply with the numerical matching of numbers and people ['bundles of skills'] to job slots" (2000, 107). Problems can also arise where an officer can be nominated to fill a position, and they "did

not get on with others in the team”, were “in the middle of a divorce”, or may not “respond well to a particular transfer” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 107).

These are not easy challenges to overcome; however, “for HR planning to be strategic it needs to take place within an organization where human resource issues are seen as central to business strategy” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 108). Bach and Sisson refer to a study by Martell and Carroll (1995) where:

A US study of subsidiaries of Fortune 500 companies found evidence of ‘strategic integration’ between the human resource and strategic planning processes. But when asked to rate the importance of different functional areas to the implementation of strategy, 37 per cent of general managers rated HRM as extremely important compared with 73 per cent saying the same of marketing (2000, 108).

The corollary is this: does the USMC see the HRM function as an extremely important part of strategic implementation, or is there some other function such as national security strategy, doctrine development, or firepower, that weighs more heavily with consideration to organizational strategy? Or, if they are all important, how are they weighted in the overall strategic goals, and how does the HRM plan link into the organizational strategy?

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management provides guidance to U.S. government departments on how to link HRM practices with organizational strategy in their publication, *Strategic Human Resource Management: Aligning with the Mission* (1999). The publication states as one of its objectives to, “Identify best practices aligning HRM with the agency strategic plan and goals” (1999, 3). To this end, an audit of ten USMC publications that provide any reference to USMC manpower/personnel systems was conducted. “Manpower Administration” was defined in MCO 5000.14D *Marine Corps Administrative Procedures* as follows:

Manpower Administration includes the optimal allocation of human resources throughout the command or unit. These tasks include internal assignments, strength-reporting, managing and validating personnel security clearance requirements, and manpower process advisement (2004, 3).

The USMC Human Resource Development Process (HRDP) deals, again, mostly with finding the right people for the right job – without deference to their individual competencies, or specific MOS competencies.

The HRDP provides very clear articulation of the following quadrants:

- Requirements
- Programming
- Planning
- Execution

Inputs to the first quadrant provide indirect acknowledgement of the political, economic, social, and technological factors that influence the organization and equipment requirements, which recognizes the external influences on the overall system of HR development for the USMC.

However, the assignment of ‘inventory’ (i.e., people) within the varied constraints of budget and individual preferences to meet staffing goals is conducted without deference to the individual competence strengths or weaknesses of the officers being assigned. It is acknowledged that this may occur informally at precept/evaluation level; however, it is not articulated anywhere in the USMC doctrine or administrative processes.

The audit revealed that the USMC places particular emphasis on promotion/assignment based upon ‘requirements’ that address strategic goals in terms of capability and mission accomplishment. To this end (faces and places), the corps is very well structured and optimized. However, there is no process review of the actual promotion/assignment practices based upon officer competencies – which would further “optimize” the allocation of human resources as described above.

In summary, the audit concluded that USMC fulfills most of the traditional HRM procedures. They are outlined in the MCO P1000.6G *Assignment, Classification and Travel Systems Manual* as:

1. procurement (recruitment and induction),
2. classification/training
3. assignment

4. reassignment,
5. promotion,
6. retention/separation,
7. personnel recordkeeping,
8. morale and welfare processes,
9. career development, and
10. personnel administrative training.

However, this study contends that the promotion and assignment processes can be improved by being more flexible to the changing nature of the organizational strategy and environment,<sup>5</sup> and being applied with recognition of the individual strengths and weaknesses of officers across competencies,<sup>6</sup> as well as the specific workplace requirements of individual positions.

The FITREP competencies and the promotion/assignment processes need to be clearly articulated with reference to the USMC strategy. The processes should provide a link to the initiatives and objectives of the strategic plan. Ideally, it should also address competencies across all dimensions of the balanced scorecard. This will enable the USMC to manage (and monitor) the execution of their strategy.

Alignment must not be done from the bottom up, i.e., take the current attributes and align them with organizational strategy. The alignment should be bottom down: what are the competencies of the organization that should drive the derivation of the FITREP competencies [attributes]? Figure 6 summarizes this process of deriving the competencies for appraisal. The competencies provide the [sic] attributes that should be appraised. They are derived from the strategic goals of the organization. Leadership should first define how the organization will be successful (in balanced scorecard language these are key performance indicators), and the performance competencies that

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<sup>5</sup> The USMC Manpower and Reserve Affairs Training Block 1 provides recognition of an “opportunity to annually revalidate and publish based on changing environment” (2004, Slide 9).

<sup>6</sup> The Australian Army provided all its officers an opportunity to complete an extensive employee profile that included personality analysis in 2002. This provided the promotion/assignment planners an opportunity to more closely align officers with the specific workplace characteristics required of different positions.

the employees are to be appraised against should contribute to these goals, and be clearly articulated. Many government employees do this through ‘performance, planning, and review reports’ – where their success is measured by clearly defined goals that contribute to the organizational strategy. The employee understands how their performance is linked into the organizational direction.

For example, if one of the goals of a business is to produce sheet-metal fabrication, then employees should not be assessed on an unrelated work skill such as concreting. This is a simple example that should make a clear point about the linkage of competencies with organizational strategy. It is expected that most USMC officers would be able to, in some way, verbally articulate how the current FITREP competencies link to the strategic goals of the organization. However, this is not articulated in any of the USMC HR doctrine or guidance.

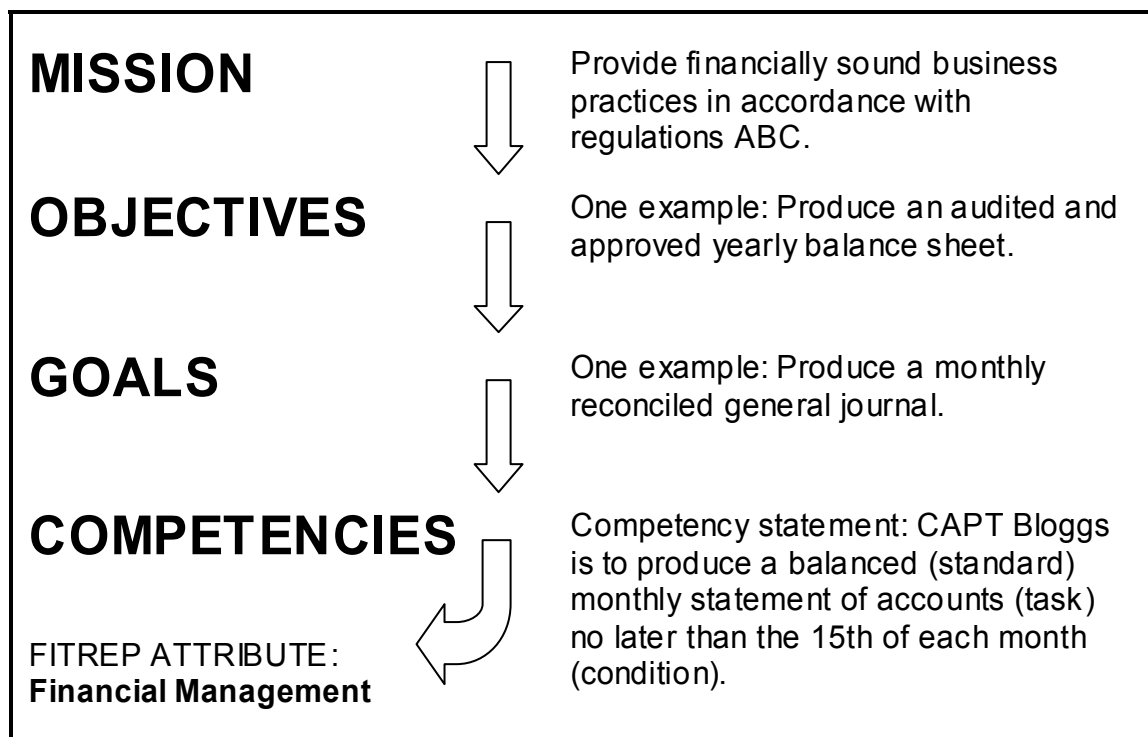


Figure 6. Example of Derivation of Appraisal Competency

Additionally, a SWOT analysis is advised to define the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats across every dimension of the balanced scorecard. This will provide an inventory of current resources and guide development of future initiatives.



## **G. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

Chmiel defines performance appraisal as follows, “essentially, performance appraisal is a generic term used to describe a range of processes whereby a manager and a subordinate meet on a periodic basis (usually annually) to review the work of the latter and to seek to raise performance levels” (2000, 126).

Chmiel notes:

One of the most frequently cited purposes of appraisal is to enable some kind of assessment to be made of the appraisee. But assessment, while constituting a core element of appraisal, is not in itself one of its purposes – assessment done for its own sake is of little value (2000, 127).

Chmiel provides the following purposes for appraisal (2000, 127):

- Improving performance
- Making reward decisions
- Motivating staff
- Developing subordinates
- Identifying potential
- Formal recording of unsatisfactory performance

In order to measure these performance dimensions, it is necessary to identify the competencies that bring success to a particular position. The USMC has identified 14 competencies necessary for successful performance in the USMC. These were discussed earlier. “Identifying which job-related attributes or competencies are of chief importance in performing a role or range of roles should result from a systematic process of job or competency analysis” (Chmiel, 2000, 131). The authors have been unable to determine the process whereby the USMC determined the current competencies assessed on the FITREP. However, once determined, there are a number of different forms of rating scale that could be used to determine performance.

Chmiel notes that conventional rating scales (such as those used by the USMC) have been “bedeviled with problems” (2000, 131). Bach and Sisson note: “The increasing use of performance appraisal, however, has been accompanied by greater awareness of its limitations” (2000, 241). Some of those problems identified in many personnel management texts are (Chmiel, 2000, 131):

- Central Tendency – everyone is rated in the middle.
- Halo Effect – assessment of one quality of the individual affects the judgment of all his or her other attributes, so all ratings are highly correlated.
- Positive Skew – everyone is rated high (all swans, no geese).

Bach and Sisson add another bias:

- Recency Bias – “because managers rarely keep detailed notes about their appraisees, and are not very precise about rating all the behaviors they are required to judge, there is a tendency to base appraisal on the recent past, regardless of how representative it is of performance over the year” (2000, 252).

Table 15 provides the following typology of rater motives and manipulative rating behavior.

Table 15. Typology of Rater Motives and Manipulative Rating Behavior

		Rater's Motive	
		Inflated	Deflated
Positive	Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the employee motivated</li> <li>• Maximize the merit pay increase</li> <li>• Avoid creating a permanent record that might damage the employee's career</li> <li>• Reward good recent performance</li> <li>• Assist an employee with a personal problem</li> <li>• Reward effort</li> <li>• Like the subordinate personality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scare better performance out of an employee to prevent eventual termination</li> <li>• Build a stronger case against and employee who is destined to be terminated</li> <li>• Provide an argument for investing in training and development of the employee</li> </ul>
	Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid washing dirty laundry in public</li> <li>• Make themselves look good</li> <li>• Avoid conflict/confrontation with a subordinate</li> <li>• Promote a problem employee up and out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Punish an employee</li> <li>• Encourage an employee to leave</li> <li>• Minimize merit pay increase</li> <li>• Comply with an organizational edict to keep ratings low</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Longnecker and Ludwig (1990)

To minimize rater error Chmiel proposes the following types of rater training to improve performance appraisal rating:

- *Rater error training*: teaching raters about the typical errors so they are sensitized to them and, in theory, less likely to make them.

- *Performance dimension training*: training raters in the use of the performance dimensions they are rating people on, and ensuring they can differentiate between them, i.e. they are able correctly to allocate a piece of behavioral ‘evidence’ to the dimension it should be rated under.
- *Frame of reference training*: seeks to give raters a clear picture of the standards they are rating people against; for example, by giving behavioral examples that would typify performance at each point on the rating scale.
- *Behavioral observation training*: focuses on the initial data collection by giving the raters training in correct observation and recording of behavior, which should enhance the quality of the ratings they eventually make.

Additionally, reluctance to confront potential situations of discomfort or conflict means managers are often reluctant to ascribe poor ratings to subordinates. Bach and Sisson draw upon the research of Rowe (1964) to write that “it is well documented that managers are reluctant to judge employees and to assign poor ratings to them” (1999, 251). Bach and Sisson say that this reluctance to provide negative feedback to employees may be due to a number of motives such as:

- A concern that it could be demotivating.
- A recognition that their own lack of support and guidance may have contributed to poor performance.

Bach and Sisson refer to Beer (1981) who provides the following summary of conflicts in performance appraisal (2000, 251).

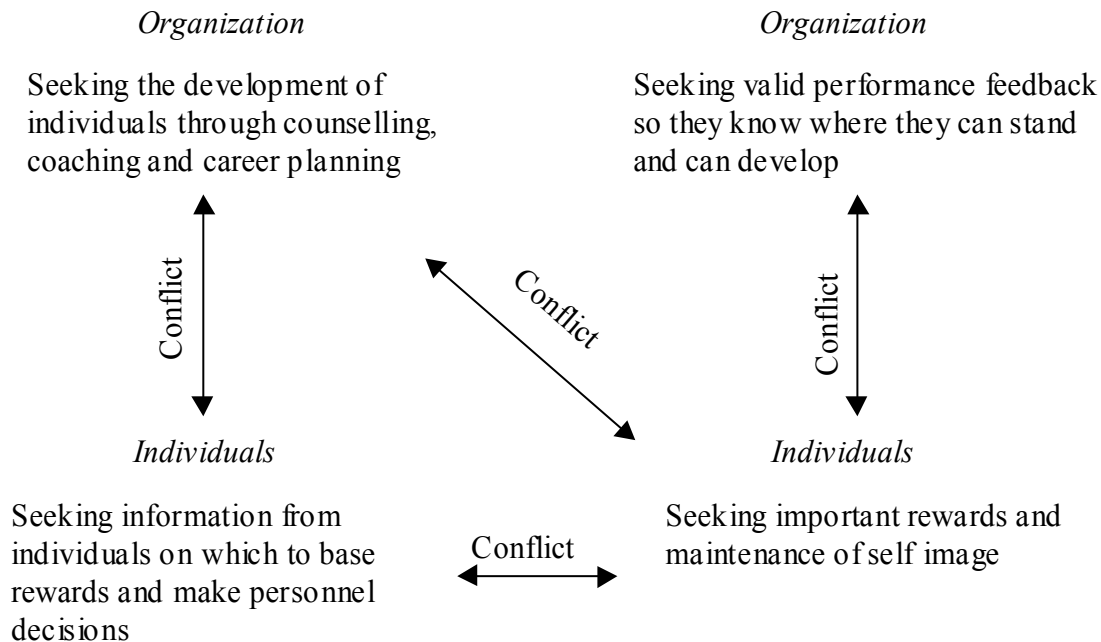


Figure 7. Conflicts in Performance Appraisal

Source: Beer 1981, Adapted from Porter, Lawler and Hackman

The tendency to avoid conflict in performance appraisals has the potential to provide “false positive” promotions/assignments, as managers may promote a subordinate who has the prerequisite ratings (although by default through conflict avoidance by the manager who perceives potential conflict with accurate reporting of the subordinate); however, they do not perform once in the assigned position.

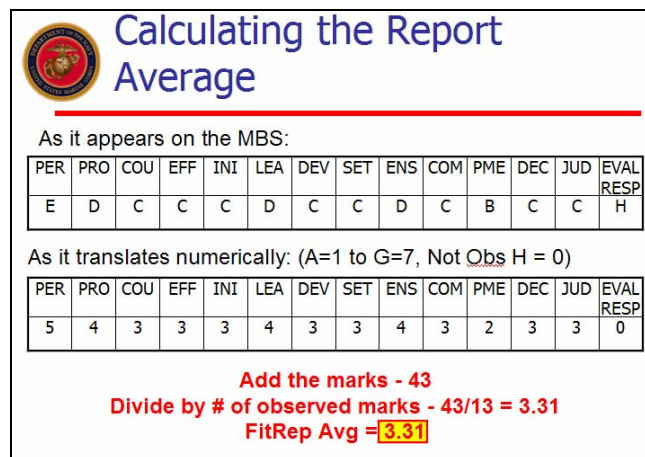
## H. CORRELATION ACROSS PERFORMANCE COMPETENCIES

Chmiel defers to a study by Fletcher (1995) that demonstrated strong correlation across thirteen performance competencies over a period of three years. Fletcher examined the appraisal ratings of graduate recruits in a bank. In this workplace environment one would not expect strong correlation between ‘numerical skills’ and ‘ability to delegate’ yet, the average correlation across the first three appraisal periods was 0.42 – “compared to the average intercorrelation of attribute ratings over the three periods of 0.49 (... all significant at the 1 per cent level)” (Chmiel, 2000, 131).

This study shows that where such rating behavior occurs it becomes almost impossible to “discriminate effectively across dimensions” (Chmiel, 2000, 131). Where

such discrimination is necessary in order to assign the right person for the right job, then the continued correlation diminishes the utility of the appraisal tool in determining the best human capital options for the organization. Factor analysis conducted by Fletcher showed that, “for each appraisal period, only one or sometimes two factors could be extracted from the ratings” (1995) demonstrating that for each time period at least eleven of the thirteen factors were highly correlated from one period to the next.

The USMC currently uses a ‘relative value’ system that “is a numerical representation of how a single fitness report compares to other reports written by the same RS on Marines of the same grade” (MMSB-30). Step two of the process involves a step of “average the attributes”. An example is given in the following slide) provided by the USMC Officer Counseling and Evaluation section (MMOA-4).



Source: MMOA-4, 2004

Figure 8. Calculating the Average Report

This process assumes that all competencies are equally important to success in every MOS and rank. However, it is contended that some competencies are more valuable to success in one MOS over another. Additionally, as officers progress through the chain of command it is expected that some competencies may become more important, such as valuing and affective skills. As noted later in the paper, the results of the FITREP analysis and the NPS survey with USMC officers identifies ‘Mission Proficiency’ and ‘Mission Performance’ as very important to success in the job – across all MOS and ranks. However, as also previously noted, much of the success in the

mission is attributable to correlation with success in leading subordinates, decision-making, sound judgment and other competencies.

The authors believe that if time allowed a study of the correlation of the USMC FITREPS from 1998 to 2004, then this study would most likely reveal similar results. For example, for a USMC officer to accomplish his or her mission successfully, it is very reasonable to expect that their leadership skills and decision-making ability (to name only a couple) must also be strong in order to support the successful outcome.

Hedge, et al., discuss “The Development of an Integrated Performance Category System for Supervisory Jobs in the U.S. Navy” (2004, 231-243). The authors used a performance behavior based domain. Following a “performance behavior sorting workshop”, they produced a “similarity correlation matrix, consisting of correlations between each pair of performance behaviors, which was then submitted to a [principal components analysis] PCA with orthogonal rotation of components to a varimax solution” (2004, 236). This enabled the authors to define a useful “eight-component solution” for use as performance criteria.

Principal component/factor analysis shows us how some variables affect other variables. The process allows factor scores to be constructed and used to replace the original variables in the regression. The collinearity problem can be solved, but there still must be interpretation of the components/factors. The goal is to decrease the number of variables (dimensionality) and create new variables that are not collinear and can be interpreted. In summary, factors are continually investigated until you find one that you can interpret to your satisfaction.

The new variables are uncorrelated with each other. However, whilst the components/factors are uncorrelated, they must still be interpreted. Factor scores can be constructed and used to replace the original variables in the regression to solve the collinearity problem. A factor analysis of the USMC FITREP competencies may reveal that, withal, only eight of the competencies may be required to deliver suitable prediction towards success and potential for promotion.

Smith and Kendall (1963) offer a process called Behaviorally Anchored Scales (BARS) to develop “carefully and systematically derived scales for assessing

performance, and seek to put the person into a more objective role” (Chmiel, 2000, 132), rather than a judgmental, subjective mode. Many contemporary texts that study appraisal systems defer to this rigorous process for establishing appropriate competencies for appraisal.

Another new form of feedback has also seen large correlation effects; the 360 degree feedback, where subordinates appraise the performance of a senior. “A study of a pilot 360 feedback system in a large oil company found that:

- the 80 individual behavioral ratings did not correspond to the competencies they were meant to;
- these ratings were so intercorrelated that in effect most of them were redundant and all that was being measured was an overall dimension of ‘good-bad’;
- the ratings did not show any relationship with another criterion measure of performance being used by the company;
- there seemed to be systematic biases that affected specific groups of raters” (Chmiel, 2000, 143).

If the promotion and assignment of the appraised managers was based upon the above results, then the process may have recommended the wrong people for promotion. Withal, these results again demonstrate that where intercorrelation exists across competencies, we diminish the efficacy of the appraisal with regard to demarcating between the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ officer, or, if not defined in this way – without weighted criteria, we are unable to optimize the evaluation and assignment of the officer.

## **I. OTHER PROMOTION AND ASSIGNMENT SUBJECTS**

Evaluating promotion/assignment methods involves a range of different considerations. Some of these considerations are outlined in the following paragraphs.

### **1. Criterion-related (predictive) Validity**

Measuring predictive validity requires that a process is established whereby the measures that are used (in the case of the USMC – the performance criteria) accurately measure what they are intended to measure. This also requires that the criteria are relevant to the job that the officer is performing, and that the scores given to officers accurately correlate with job performance. These factors will determine the reliability of

the criteria. From the position of the USMC, another concern is how accurate are these performance criteria in determining officers who consequently demonstrate effective job performance?

## 2. Selection Criteria

Anne McCormack (2003) provides Figure 9 to demonstrate the relationship between predictors and criteria. It also demonstrates that the relationship between predictors and criteria is measured by the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient is “a measure of the degree of linear relationship between two variables” (Muchinksly, 2003, 40). The range and sign (-1.00 - +1.00) of the coefficient determine the strength and direction of the relationship.

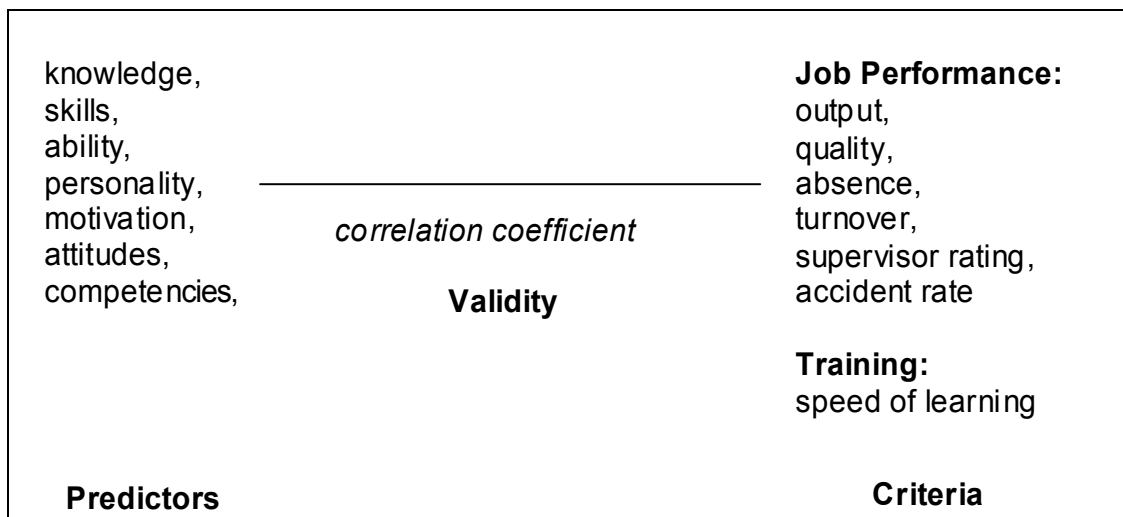


Figure 9. Relationship Between Predictors and Criteria

The relationship between predictors and criteria with respect to the success of USMC FITREP scores can therefore be demonstrated with Figure 9.



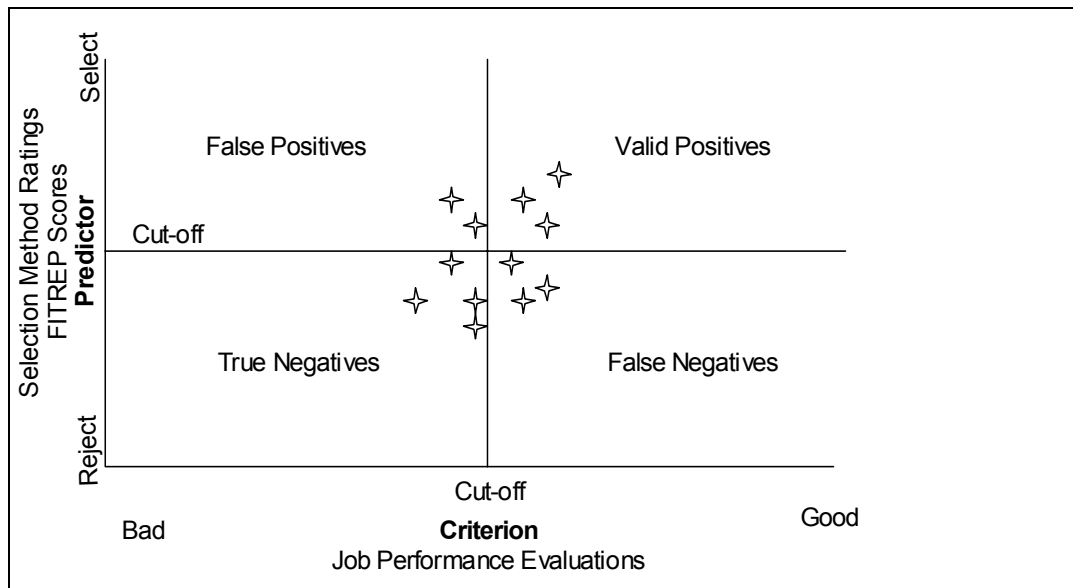


Figure 10. Selection Decision Outcomes

- *Valid positives* are the officers who are rated above the required cut-off and, consequently, are effective performers.
- *Valid negatives* are the officers who are rated below the cut-off for promotion selection, or assignment, who, if they had been promoted or assigned – would have been ineffective performers.
- *False positives* are the officers who are rated above the required cut-off and, consequently, are ineffective performers.
- *False negatives* are the officers who are rated below the required cut-off and, consequently, would have been effective performers.

With reference to Figure 10, the USMC seeks to minimize both false positives and false negatives, and maximize valid positives and valid negatives. On first impression, the objective to maximize valid negatives may appear unusual. However, if we maximize the number of valid negatives, we are, by exception, with a fixed number of officers eligible for selection each period - eliminating those officers who are not performing.

### 3. Predictivist versus Constructivist

McCormack describes the military model of selection as placing emphasis on the “predictivist model” (2003). McCormack contrasts the predictivist approach with the constructivist approach as follows:

Table 16. Predictivist versus Constructivist Approaches to Selection

<b>Predictivist</b>	<b>Constructivist</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection as rational, strategic organizational decision.</li> <li>• Evaluates selection processes from organizational side and on technical basis – reliability, validity, utility and fairness.</li> <li>• Best methods are: psychometric tests, multiple methods, competence, competency frameworks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledges a two-way process.</li> <li>• Accepts the role of applicants.</li> <li>• Emphasizes social processes (e.g. recruitment stage, the value of the interview, fit with organizational values).</li> </ul>

Although discussion about predictivist versus constructivist approaches to selection have been mostly related to recruitment and selection – the same principles can be applied to promotion and assignment: the organization is seeking to find the right person for the job under changing internal and external environments. McCormack defines the predictivist perspective as follows:

- Selection of individuals (viewed as ‘subjects’).
- Jobs and organizations are relatively stable.
- The goal is person-job fit.

Assessment of ‘fit’ can be made scientific, rigorous and objective.

The predictivist approach can be seen clearly in the two-sided matching process. It is an attempt to provide a person-job fit through a “scientific, rigorous and objective” matching process. Additionally, it may be said to be taking advantage of a relatively stable organizational system. McCormack continues to apply these characteristics to the military with the following observations:

- Large numbers of recruits (low selection ratio, i.e., numbers hired divided by numbers applying).
- Can be highly selective.
- Relatively stable jobs (or are they?).
- Maximizing reliability and criterion-related validity of predictors, especially psychometric tests.
- Utility of sophisticated selection procedure is high.
- Concerns about adverse impact of selection procedures.

McCormack draws her guidance from Chmiel who summarizes the predictivist approach essentially as viewing “the job as a given and stable entity into which the most suitable candidate needs to be recruited.” Chmiel continues, “Person-job fit is therefore of primary importance” (Cook, 1993).

Chmiel describes a “series of actions put forward in most traditional predictivist selection textbooks” (2000, 71). Some of these are:

- *Job Analysis*: conduct a detailed and comprehensive job analysis in order to establish the task and activities which comprise it.
- *Person specification*: translate the findings of the analysis into a schedule of the skills, knowledge, abilities and other factors (SKAOs) needed by the person to perform the job effectively.
- *Selection Criteria*: from the job analysis and person specification establish discrete criteria for the selection process against which to screen applicants (2000, 71).

Chmiel provides the following summary of the constructivist perspective:

As job roles become more flexible and as organizations become increasingly aware of the need to compete for the best candidates (Murphy, 1986), selection research from the constructivist perspective has gained momentum. This perspective emphasizes that candidates, as well as organizations, make decisions in selection. Several European authors have highlighted how, during selection, expectations of the organization and the potential employee build up and both sides use their meetings during the process to construct a ‘viable psychological contract’ (Herriot, 1989) which underpins their future working relationship (Anderson and Shackleton, 1993; Dachler, 1994).

The psychological contract has been defined by Kotter (1973, p. 92) as ‘an implicit contract between an individual and his [or her] organization which specifies what each expect to give and receive from each other in their relationship.’ The constructivist perspective views selection as a series of social episodes providing an opportunity for both parties to explore whether a future working relationship would be viable. Selection therefore serves as an opportunity for information exchange and the development of mutual expectations and obligations (Herriot, 1989).

Hence, from this perspective, selection aims to ensure not only person-job fit, but also person-organization fit (that is, the fit between the applicant’s values and organizational culture) and person-team fit (that is, the fit between the applicant’s skills and attitudes and the climate of the immediate working group).

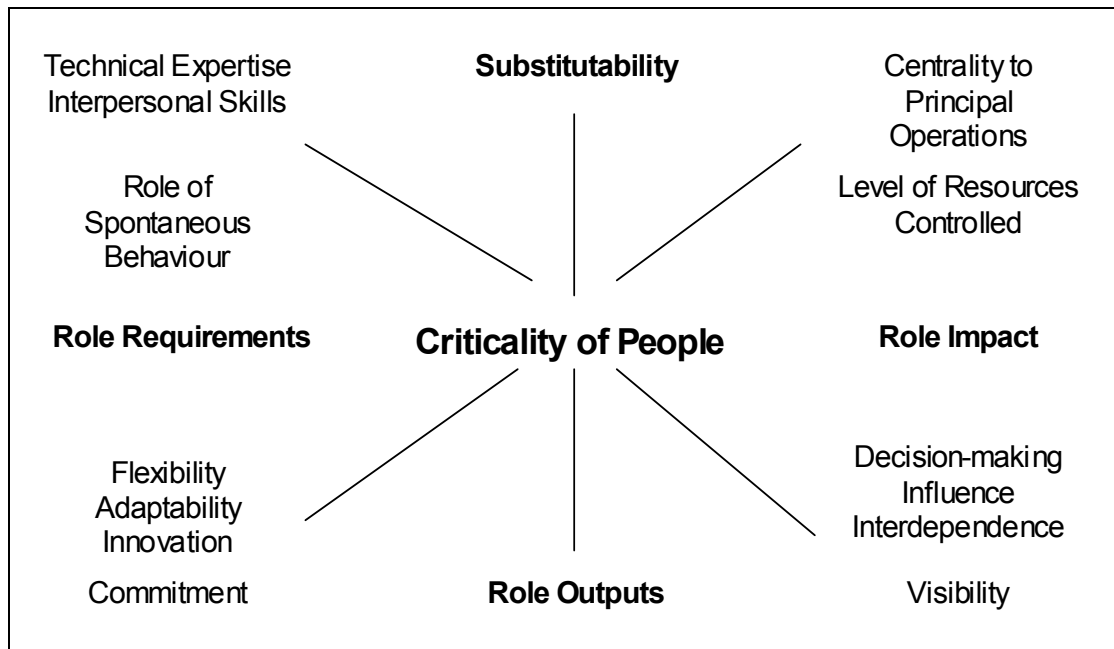
Chmiel describes the key elements of the predictivist and constructivist approaches as follows:

Table 17. Key Elements of the Predictivist and Constructivist perspectives

	<b>Predictivist Approach</b>	<b>Constructivist Perspective</b>
Primary Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational decision-making between numerous candidates</li> <li>• Person-job fit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational and candidate decision-making</li> <li>• Construction of a viable psychological contract</li> <li>• Person-team and person-organization fit</li> </ul>
Selection Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As predictors of future job performance</li> <li>• As information elicitation techniques applied to applicants</li> <li>• As representative samples of behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As social episodes</li> <li>• As opportunities for information exchange</li> <li>• As ‘socialization impact’ upon applicants</li> </ul>
Selection Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unilateral, made by the organization upon candidates</li> <li>• Primarily as (numeric) predictors of subsequent job performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socially negotiated, each party deciding whether to continue the relationship further</li> <li>• The ‘tip of the iceberg’ concealing complex social and psychological processes ‘under the surface’.</li> </ul>

Source: Chmiel, 2000, 71

McCormack (2003) also offers an alternative approach to determining the relative importance of people in an organization. This approach is shown in Figure 10. If the aim of the FITREP is to determine the best people for the job, then, under this model of the ‘criticality of people’, does the FITREP allow us to determine those people? Does the FITREP reflect flexibility, innovation, and resource management? Other elements of this approach may be linked to similar criteria on the FITREP. For example, role outputs, in the context of the USMC, may be defined as mission accomplishment.



Source: Chmiel, 2000, 71

Figure 11. Factors Affecting the Criticality of Employees

**Costs and benefits.** The benefits and costs of selection methods includes cost of selection method, cost of member, and related factors, weighed against the benefits of the matched employee. For example, if the costs of the selection system outweigh the benefits that the matched employee provides to the organization, then cost optimization is required to determine the best system for matching.

#### 4. Social Justice Mandates

Consideration of social justice requirements, including equal employment opportunities and affirmative action legislation, are also relevant to the assignment process. As an example of an effect that is discussed in this analysis is affirmative action policy. This policy is sometimes criticized as promoting ‘reverse-discrimination’ by ‘gate-keeping’ potentially better qualified personnel from the officer ranks with potential for further career development. We are told that the Marine Corps is “colorblind” (Vold, 1998, 15); however, Vold claims that “OSOs are forced to take some marginally qualified minority individuals and provide them extra attention and preparation for exams in order to get them into our programs” due to “reverse discrimination.”

Consequently, “over the last few years minorities have been suffering higher than average OCS attrition”, whilst more capable non-minorities are overlooked due to *Operation Order 1-95, Campaign Plan to Increase Diversity Within the marine Corps*” (1998, 16). This effect may discount the value of the FITREP scores as military leaders remain conscious of meeting affirmative action goals for promotions in the military.

## **5. Organizational Design Factors and Outputs**

Such factors may include length of employment contracts, career development, productivity requirements (in the civilian sector these are often tied to enterprise bargaining agreements) and cost constraints such as movement and training costs. Some of these considerations are already included in Robard’s two-sided matching decision support system.

## **6. Software**

The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) is one example of many successful decision-making processes that have become widely used around the world. Plug ‘decision support software’ into any internet search engine and literally dozens of sites will appear from around the world ready to provide professional guidance on multi-criteria, decision support software. These systems can be adapted to provide weighted multi-criteria decision support assistance for almost any decision. John Benyon, from “decide|ware” from Sydney, Australia, advised that he has already completed a wide range of support for the Australian Defence Force (ADF), mostly in the area of contract evaluation and similar projects.

Benyon provides a summary of their services:

Decideware offers a suite of '**on demand**' online business applications based around decision making, performance measurement and benchmarking—in many cases we take existing paper-based processes and make them faster, more efficient and easier for larger organizations to use by delivering them across the web.

The applications help collect, process and report on information in core business activities in areas such as recruitment selection, 360° reviews, tender evaluation, supplier management, commercialization and corporate governance.

Our applications are all web based to enable easy access from anywhere in the world without complicated software installation. They have been designed to produce immediate returns and most clients are up and running in just one week.

Many of the other companies also assist with human resource applications. The General User Interface (GUI) of these systems minimizes ‘whole of life’ expenses such as training, maintenance, and updating. John is representative of dozens of new companies providing decision support resources.<sup>7</sup> Nearly all offer some form of human resource promotion system that “predict likely outcomes, plan projected and desired futures, facilitate group decision making, exercise control over changes in the decision making system, allocate resources, select alternatives, do cost/benefit comparisons, evaluate employees and allocate wage increases” (<http://www.expertchoice.com>).

These decision support software systems should be considered when looking to automate personnel assignment algorithms. Further attention should be directed towards these systems, suffice to note at this point that they exist - and are able to provide some utility for decision support systems.

## **7. Weighting Selection Criteria**

The MARCORPROMMAN does not provide any guidance on the relative importance of selection criteria in the promotion board process. The Australian Army’s Directorate of Officer Career Management (DOCM-A) provides the following distribution of importance in the officer promotion process.

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<sup>7</sup> A website is devoted to these resources at <http://dssresources.com/>.

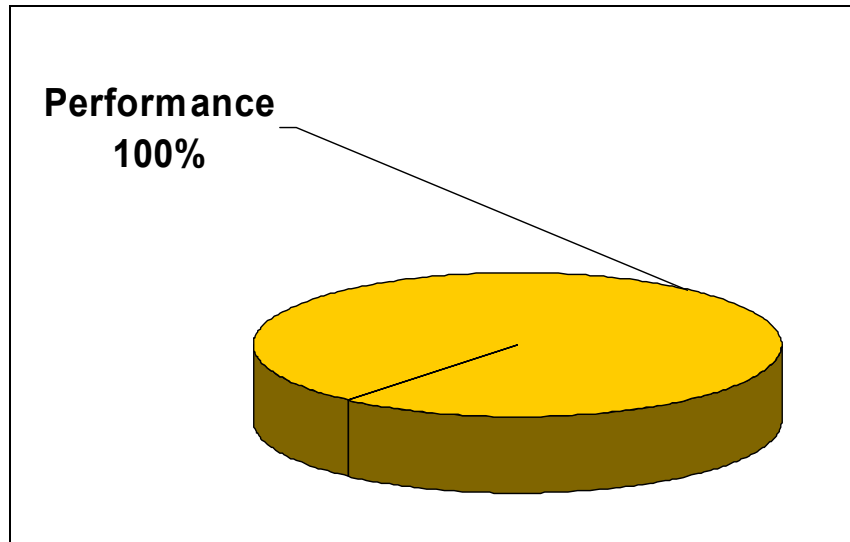


Figure 12. Promotion Model 2LT to MAJ

The “leadership pipeline” described previously shows a transition of skills from task-related skills to more affective skills.

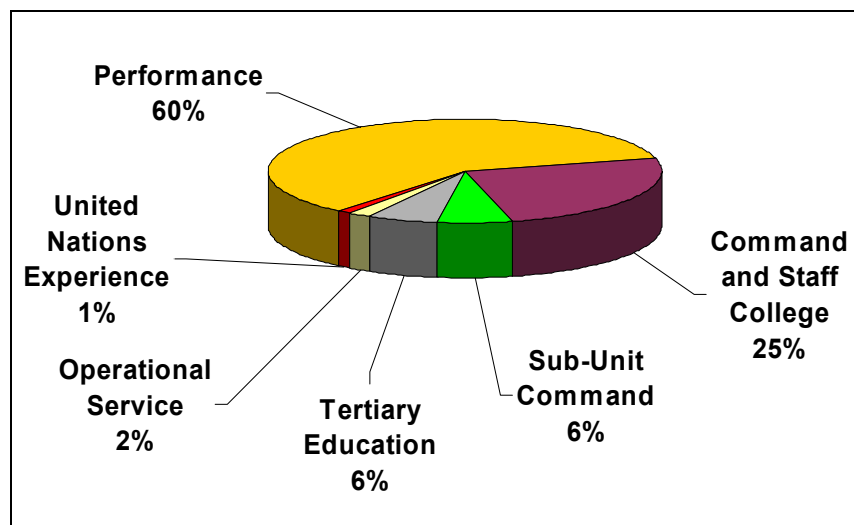


Figure 13. Promotion model LTCOL to GEN

Figure 13 demonstrates some acknowledgement of this transition. The figure shows that the promotion from Major upwards is influenced by other factors outside the annual performance report. In recognition of the rapidly changing nature of world politics and strategy, and increasing responsibility of non field-level command positions, the ADF provides the following weighting for selection above Major.



By placing value on all these wide-ranging experiences, training and education - the ADF attempts to provide broadly skilled and experienced senior officers. It is indeterminable at this stage if the same process/guidance occurs in the USMC.

## **J. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Study by Roe and Berg (2003)**

Roe and Berg completed an analysis designed to “give a contextual description of personnel selection in Europe, and to highlight some typical features and recent trends in practice and research” (Roe et al, 2003, 257). They note that “psychological publications on personnel selection often characterize selection as deciding which employees to hire on the basis of predicted job performance” (Roe et al, 2003, 257). Predictors are those performance criteria or signals that are used by an organization to predict future job performance (in the USMC, they are the fourteen performance criteria used in their FITNESS report). Criteria are the measures or benchmarks used by an organization in order to make some judgment about the success of an employee.

Roe and Berg reported that “the way in which selection is carried out seems to depend on a variety of factors, ranging from job content, type of industry, and labor market conditions, to legislation, labor relations, the involvement of professions, and cultural patterns” (2003, 258). In the context of the USMC, these factors may be more, or less important. Some may have little relevance at all, such as labor relations - because the military institution does not have union representation. Additionally, Roe and Berg note that “changing organizational forms” have resulted in a range of structural and transitional changes in organizations that also has an effect on selection processes (2003, 260).

The ‘organizational form’ of the USMC is also changing. There is a plethora of new battlefield technologies, without due adjustment in the promotion and assignment processes. Businesses that do not know how to apply and maintain a competitive edge with technology - will lose. Bach and Sisson state:

It is hard to imagine any manager’s job insulated from technology. Technology is affecting what managers are responsible for, how they carry out their duties, what they need to learn, and how they learn. Technology

provides managers with new means of carrying out their tasks. Technology changes managers' relationships too, both their nature, and with whom they interface (2000, 215)

It is often easy for corporate leaders, bureaucracies, and management teams, however unintentional, to lose touch with the modern methods of thinking, acting, and producing for age-old, traditional practices. Afuah and Tucci provide an excellent summary of the two things that “determine the extent to which a firm can turn profit from its invention or technology: imitability and complementary assets” (2003).

The guidelines they set out for developing technology in order to make profit can be quickly summarized with the statement, “profiting from technology will take more than mastering the new technology” (Afuah and Tucci, 2003). From a defense perspective, often overlooked, but equally important, are business, institutional, attitudinal, and ideological adjustments. Business models must be developed that provide a model for continuing value enhancement and, not just new ideas – but the innovation to convert these new technologies into services and products that increase profit.

Myron Ross, in his interesting book, *A Gale of Creative Destruction: The Coming Economic Boom 1992-2020*, provides worthy discussion about the rapidly decreasing time interval from invention to innovation (1989, 63). Ross notes that as “innovation increases, the rate of investment also increases . . . the increased rate of investment will reduce the average age of the capital stock” (1989, 62) – this implies new management strategies, especially for huge organizations such as the USMC in developing and maintaining expensive war-fighting capital items.

On prima facie consideration, many people immediately think that the technology must create more revenue; however, every strategy-maker ascribes to the basic tenet that there are two ways to make more profit: (1) raise revenue or, (2) decrease costs.

So, the business analogy still applies to the USMC. Not only must the USMC adopt new technologies, but it must also know how to best apply these technologies on the battlefield to gain the winning edge. Additionally, the world has become more complex. Political and ethical impositions assert themselves at every level of command. For most of history, various forms of nation-state sovereignty exerted themselves through colonialism, Americanism, imperialism – call it what you will; however, military leaders

today operate in a new environment. Many world analysts ascribe the contemporary model of international relations known as 'reformism'. The world is becoming smaller. Decisions made by countries reach beyond national boundaries and leaders require a degree of political acumen and sensibility to these conditions. Military leaders today must have a wider set of skills.

Table 18 shows the wide range of selection practices used by organizations throughout Europe and the U.S. It may be argued that the military institution is not subject to the same "market orientation" (Roe, et al., 2003, 260) and consequent changes in organizational form; therefore, the selection process has remained largely unchanged for many years.

Roe, et al., provide six selection principles (2003, 263):

**Meritocracy.** The principle that one should take the best candidate for a job and give the best job to the most qualified person is perhaps a universal one.

**Risk avoidance.** This principle sees the purpose of selection in preventing the appointment of people who might constitute a risk for the organization, either because they are psychologically or physically unfit for the job, or are not qualified enough to meet the standards of the job in the long term.

**Employment and career opportunity.** According to this principle, jobs are the main vehicle by which people find employment and shape their careers.

**Fair chance.** This principle, rejecting "procedural justice", implies that selection procedures should be free of bias and discrimination.

**Two-sidedness.** This principle defines selection as a matter of two parties, i.e., the employer and the candidate, both of whom have legitimate interests and rights.

**Involvement.** This principle highlights the interests of stakeholders other than the employer and the candidate. The idea that parties affected by appointments have a say in the selection process is widely accepted in Europe.

Some of the above selection processes such as meritocracy and fair chance are clearly noticeable in the USMC practices. Table 18, certainly appears to encompass the above principles. When analyzing Table 18 it is also important to note that the strength

of these selection practices will be determined by their “sources of predictive information” (Roe, et al., 2003, 266) and their validity. An important note by Roe and Berg is the findings of Ryan, et al., (1999):

That the use of peers as interviewers is negatively related to power distance and uncertainty avoidance, as defined by Hofstede (1991),  $r = -.38$ ,  $p < .001$ , and  $r = -.39$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectively. Since these two indices are positively related to the number of test types used,  $r = .34$ ,  $p < .001$ , and  $r = .23$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectively, cultural differences can also explain why some European countries use more test types in personnel selection than the U.S.

The USMC selection process makes very limited use of the interview practice. According to the above study, this provides a high level of uncertainty avoidance for the institution and a pronounced power distance within the organization. However, this is not unexpected for a military organization that is very hierarchical in nature and design.

Table 18. Selection Practices in 11 European Countries and the United States (1999)

Selection Practice	Popularity	Sweden	Germany	Netherlands	UK	Ireland	Belgium	France	Portugal	Spain	Italy	Greece	EU	US
One-on-One Interviews	1	4.84	4.65	3.78	3.88	3.34	4.70	4.85	4.77	4.70	4.93	4.92	4.49	4.78
Group/Panel Interviews	7	2.82	1.88	4.30	3.82	4.00	2.75	2.06	3.29	2.45	1.50	2.71	2.87	3.27
Educational Qualifications	2	4.30	4.47	4.68	4.32	4.42	3.19	4.37	4.91	2.43	4.08	4.32	4.14	4.47
Application Form	3	1.19	3.65	3.55	4.26	3.46	3.94	4.09	3.40	3.22	4.19	2.92	3.44	4.12
Employee Referees	5	4.49	2.03	2.72	4.37	4.53	2.64	3.32	3.14	2.43	2.69	2.30	3.15	4.02
Life History Questionnaire	10	1.59	2.77	1.53	1.23	1.18	1.52	1.20	2.29	1.68	1.92	3.87	1.89	1.21
Cognitive Ability Test	8	2.86	1.90	3.76	3.08	2.79	3.85	2.29	3.27	3.75	1.33	2.54	2.86	2.09
Personality Questionnaire	6	3.68	1.70	3.29	3.46	3.17	3.75	3.42	3.00	4.43	1.86	3.14	3.17	1.62
Simulation Exercise	9	1.72	1.70	2.82	2.52	1.44	2.73	1.82	2.57	2.15	1.57	1.85	2.08	1.82
Graphology	11	1.27	1.00	1.24	1.10	1.00	1.56	3.26	1.00	1.75	1.00	1.21	1.40	1.09
Medical Screen	4	3.26	4.45	4.18	3.91	4.31	3.50	1.76	4.14	3.54	2.33	2.36	3.43	2.26
Peers as Interviewers (%)		26.4	8.6	54.5	25.5	16.3	29.4	28.6	9.7	8.3	3.4	7.4	19.83	55.8
Number of test Types		5.23	3.40	5.34	4.74	3.31	5.78	3.50	6.77	6.40	3.00	4.28	4.70	3.75
Number of Categorizations		91	35	66	108	49	68	35	31	24	29	27	563	52

Response Categories Ranged from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always), except for “peers as interviewers” and “number of tests”

Roe and Berg also note that “practice is always lagging behind in putting new technology to use” (2003, 271). With the sophisticated algorithms and technology of today, the development of a two-sided, multi-criteria, decision support system should be the leading technology application of the assignment process. Roe and Berg also make some contemporary observations about the “notion of competence” (2003, 272). They note that “competences correspond to what used to be called ‘criteria’, whereas competencies are synonym for ‘predictors’” (2003, 272), or “can be equated to individual characteristics, such as knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and abilities (KSAs)” (2003, 277).

Roe, et al., (277) further note that “competences can be considered as ‘criteria’ for selection.” The PES refers to fourteen areas of assessment as “attributes” (1998, 4-24). For the purpose of this paper, and to avoid confusion with these two words that are often used interchangeably, the USMC FITREP attributes will be referred to as “competencies” in accordance with the above definition. The other elements of the USMC selection process, such as level of fitness and education (with the competencies), may be referred to as competences because they are “criteria for selection” (Roe, et al., 2003, 277).

Although there has been some conceptual confusion, the term “competence” has often been used for an individual’s capacity to adequately perform a certain role task, role or job, whereas “competency” has become a generic concept used to refer to a wide array of individual characteristics, such as knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, personality traits, values, interests, and biographical characteristics (Roe, et al., 2003, 272).

Roe and Berg also refer to a wide range of studies that have been conducted on the “criterion development, test development, predictive validity, validity generalization, and utility assessment” (2003, 272) of personnel selection. They challenge the idea of the “classical paradigm of the right man in the right place” as referred to in Robard’s thesis (2003, 274), and other papers.

They claim that this is “based on the assumption of a universe of stable people and stable jobs, and the idea that selection is basically a matter of matching individuals and jobs” (2003, 274). Their contention is based on their claim that the concept of stability in jobs and the labor market is “no longer valid” (2003, 274). People, the economy, industry, labor markets and business models are changing rapidly.

They “proposed an alternative paradigm, labeled ‘theatre model’, which uses the theatre as a metaphor of the modern work organization” (2003, 274).

The contrast between the two paradigms is obvious. Whereas the ‘right man in the right place’ paradigm aims at creating conditions for good performance by filling places with qualified people, the ‘theatre-model’ aims at developing competences and shaping performance, emphasizing the relationship between selection, learning in practice, and direction. Instead of stability of people and jobs, the assumption here is the changeability of people and tasks within an organizational framework that is essentially dynamic and depends on delivered performance for its existence. The view of selection is therefore different as well (Roe, 1996).

A tabular comparison of the two models is shown at Table 19. This provides some challenges for the traditional promotion/assignment process used by the USMC. It is the intent of this analysis to provide some guidance on the second point of the theatre model. Are we able to identify critical competencies for the performance of jobs across different MOS and through the command structure?

Table 19. Comparison of Selection Paradigms

<b>Right Man in the Right Place Paradigm Selection</b>	<b>Theatre Model</b>
(1) a one-shot affair with a “preventive” purpose, that is, selection precedes a longer period of employment;	(1) a recurrent series of selections, carried out shortly before new organizational arrangements become operational;
(2) the person is evaluated against the job as a whole, and in terms of categories such as “suitable” or “unsuitable”; and	(2) selection based on facets that are critical for the roles to be performed and the ability to acquire them by collective learning, but not for the actor’s job as a whole; and
(3) there is a strict separation between selection and other means for person – job adjustment, i.e., training and job design, which presuppose malleability of the person and the job. In terms of the underlying principles the focus is on meritocracy and risk avoidance.	(3) a close connection between selection, training, and coaching during the work process. Here the emphasis is on the principle of employment and career opportunity.
Source: Berg and Roe, 2003, 275	

“Roe (2002) has proposed an architectural model of competences in which a distinction is made between:

1. organization and job specific competences,
2. generic or basic competences,
3. knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and
4. dispositions such as abilities, personality traits, interests, values, and other characteristics.”

Competences are supposed to be acquired by a process of on-the-job learning that provides for an integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These latter components are typically at the focus of training and education. The primary focus of personnel selection is on the dispositions necessary for people to learn knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as to acquire competences (2003, 277).

There appears to be little inclusion of personnel’s interests, and no demarcation nor definition between generic or base competencies and job-specific competencies in the USMC FITREP. Is it possible to define the FITREP competencies as generic or basic competencies; or can they be weighted towards specific MOS?

The inclusion of training development as a criterion in Major Robards’ decision support system considers the developmental requirements identified by Roe. Roe and Berg provide some guidance on possible future research that may “resolve a number of issues” (2003, 277):

1. The identification of specific and generic job competences by derivation from organizations’ core competences.
2. The analysis of (specific and generic) competences into knowledge, skill, and attitudes components.
3. The development of competence models, which allow the prediction of (specific and generic) competences from stable personal dispositions.

What this chapter will not determine is how the USMC derives its competencies from the organization’s strategy. This chapter, and the following chapter that analyses survey results from USMC officers at NPS, may provide some insight into those



competencies that are valued by the USMC. In relation to the second proposal, Roe defers to Van den Berg (1998) who “proposed a typology in which a distinction is made between trainable cognitive competences (cf. knowledge), trainable behavioral competences (cf. skills), stable cognitive competences (ability dispositions), and stable behavioral competences (personality dispositions)” (2003, 278).

Roe continues, “All these competencies can be measured with rating scales” (2003, 278), which is the primary performance reporting practice of the USMC FITREP. With the identification of MOS specific competencies, and personal strengths and weaknesses of personnel, it is anticipated that competence models could be developed for the USMC. Roe and Berg (2003, 278) also offered some selection “innovations” in an attempt to shift from the “right man in the right place” towards the “theatre model.” They are defined as follows:

**Broad person-oriented assessment.** Since people increasingly have to work under changeable circumstances and to perform tasks that cannot be known in advance, one might return to the broad person-oriented assessment of former days. Selection can be based on a personal profile constructed by using an encompassing assessment battery, which covers a wide range of competencies (abilities, aptitudes, character traits, temperaments, interests, etc.), from which the suitability for several types of tasks or missions can be derived.

**Focused competence-oriented assessment.** Researchers might also direct their attention to the assessment of particular basic competences, corresponding to relatively stable work functions, such as planning, composing text, or driving vehicles.

**Just-in-time selection.** When job changes preclude the prediction over a longer time interval, i.e., an interval of 6 months or more, typical for personnel selection, one might try to reduce the length of the prediction interval by carrying out the assessment and making the selection decision just before assigning a new task or composing a new team.

If assignment was to occur in accordance with the leadership pipeline concept we may expect that the process would shift from the ‘focused competence-oriented

assessment' towards 'broad person-oriented assessment' to allow more heuristic selection of the officer.

## **2. Study by Ergun (2001)**

The purpose of Ergun's thesis was to "identify and evaluate the factors affecting career development of U.S. Marine Corps Officers" (2001, 2). Ergun compared accession programs with retention, as well as the FITREP reports of USMC officers across various accession programs. Ergun noted that the "military is unique in being the only institution in which the officer profession can be practiced" (2001, 18). However, it may be argued that there are other uniformed institutions that have similar cultural influences such as police, sheriff, and fire departments. This may also explain why rhetorical evidence suggests that a large percentage of former military members gravitate towards these institutions upon leaving the military.

Ergun developed a Performance Index (PI) based upon the FITNESS reports. The PI was calculated by adding the scores across all 14 competencies<sup>8</sup> and then dividing them by the number of competencies to give an average. Ergun describes these competencies as "traits" (2003, 53). "The trait approach emphasizes the personal attributes of leaders" (Muchinsky, 2003, 418). Trait theories had their origin in early leadership models that "attributed success to the possession of abstract abilities such as energy, intuition, and foresight" (Muchinsky, 2003, 418).

This description may not be entirely appropriate with regard to new interpretations of the trait approach. It may be argued that the FITREP is more subjective and the only opportunity reporting supervisors are given to reflect on these attributes are in their written comments.

Muchinsky states, "Advances in trait research led to a change of focus from abstract personality traits to more specific attributes that can be related directly to behaviors required for effective leadership in a particular situation" (2003, 418).<sup>9</sup> It may

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<sup>8</sup> Ergun describes the competencies as "attributes". Earlier he describes them as traits. This highlights the difficulties in defining the exact purpose of these competencies.

<sup>9</sup> This is often referred to as 'contingency leadership'.

be argued that the USMC FITREP is more consistent with the behavioral approach to leadership. Muchinsky defines this approach (2003, 419):

The behavioral approach emphasizes what leaders actually do on the job and the relationship of this behavior to leader effectiveness. Two major lines of behavior research are (1) the classification of leadership behaviors into taxonomies and (2) the identification of behaviors relate to criteria of leadership effectiveness.

The USMC FITREP includes five leadership competencies that have been designated as relating to leadership effectiveness. In summary, it may be argued that the FITREP is more behavioral than trait oriented.

The methodology of this paper will not include analyzing the average influence of competencies across the FITREP. (This analysis is concerned with identifying if there are any trends across these competencies across particular MOS and ranks). Ergun defined these influences as “affective traits” (2003, 63).

He also outlines two other categories: (1) “personal characteristics” that included marital status, gender, and ethnicity and, (2) “cognitive human capital” that included GCT and TBS information that he believed influence performance. These details are not provided in the data for the FITREP analysis and so are not included in the analysis.

### **3. Study by Hosek and Warner (1984)**

Hosek and Warner conducted a study on “How the Quality of Military Personnel is Revealed Over Time” (2003). The objective of their study was “to expand the definition of enlisted personnel quality in a way that includes information revealed through actual performance during the first term” (2003, 75). They “estimated quality from information on a member’s promotion speed relative to peers, the validity of the finding that the military tends to keep its high-quality members depends on the validity of the promotion system in identifying those members” (xii). Validity is defined as a criteria that produces the desired effect, i.e., do the current FITREP competencies adequately identify quality officers for the USMC? They ask the question, “Is the military keeping the members with the best performance and the best potential?” (2003, 75).

Hosek and Warner proceed with their study “on the assumption that promotion criteria involve: (1) duty performance, (2) skills and knowledge, (3) physical fitness, (4) awards and decorations and, (5) education – [and] are useful indicators of quality” (2003). They also “assume that an organization has a hierarchical structure and that its workers may progress up the structure depending on their skills, knowledge, leadership, ability to communicate, ability to work in teams, reliability, and judgment” (2003, 20).

Hosek et al address the influence of team work in a military environment. The ability to work in teams is an underestimated effect in military life. “Unit or team output is usually not measured or recorded, and the relationship between an individual’s effective ability and his or her output, if measured, may not be linear” (Hosek et al, 2003, 35).

In the military, job performance has many aspects; the member is responsible not only for doing certain tasks that present themselves but also for being ready to do a full range of mission-essential tasks. Therefore, validation studies cannot simply look at a service member as though he or she were a worker doing a single assigned task (Hosek and Warner, 2003, 75).

No study on individual performance measurement has been uncovered in the author’s literature review that has addressed the relevance and efficacy of the team dynamic in a military environment.

Hosek and Warner also note that Gibbons and Waldman (1999) “recognized that organizations have imperfect information about workers.” This is important when we consider the relationships between the wage and promotion dynamics of internal labor markets such as the DoD. Studies of internal labor markets must also consider measures “across cohorts, occupations, and services” (Hosek et al, 1999). “Learning about worker ability must be a part of any model capable of explaining the features of wage change and promotion observed in internal labor markets” (Gibbons et al, 1999). Gibbon and Waldman (1999) also provide the following features to make the theory of job assignment possible:

- Human capital acquisition.
- Assignment based on effective ability.

- Symmetric learning about worker ability.

Hosek and Warner acknowledge that they “have not undertaken a separate study to validate the relationship between promotion speed and objective measures of job performance” (2003, 35). Such a study would need to look at promotion rates related with each of the competencies selected as criteria for promotion in the FITREP. This is beyond the objective of this study at this time.

Hosek and Warner also use Gibbons and Waldman’s (1999) research to provide a comparison between private and military organizations.

Private Organizations	Military
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real wage decreases occur infrequently.</li> <li>• Demotions are rare.</li> <li>• Wage increases are serially correlated.</li> <li>• Promotion speeds are serially correlated.</li> <li>• On average, workers who receive a large wage increase early at one level of a job ladder are promoted more quickly to the next.</li> <li>• Individuals promoted from one level of the job ladder to the next come disproportionately from the top of the lower job’s wage distribution and go disproportionately into the bottom of the upper job’s wage distribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real basic pay increase was below CPI in 10 of 17 years from 1981 to 1998. However, a service member’s pay growth also depends on promotion and longevity increases. Overall, real wage increases are infrequent.</li> <li>• Same</li> <li>• Within a rank, the basic pay table dictates wage increases.</li> <li>• Same</li> <li>• Wage movement within a rank follows the basic pay table. But, previous studies demonstrate that members promoted quickly through junior ranks tend to be promoted faster later.</li> <li>• Promotion points tend to accumulate with experience and longevity wage increases occur, so those promoted tend to come from the top of the lower job’s wage distribution. They tend to enter the bottom of the next rank’s wage distribution. However, members who accumulate promotion points most rapidly might be nearer the middle of the wage distribution in their rank when they are promoted.</li> </ul>

Figure 14. Wage and Promotion Dynamics

Hosek and Warner also note that the quality factor is a relative measure. “It depends on a member’s promotion speed *relative to that of peers*” (2003, 75).

The services do not necessarily slow down the promotion tempo for cohorts of lower absolute quality or speed it up for cohorts of higher absolute quality. Consider a member with high absolute quality. The member would be promoted quickly if his or her peers were of low absolute quality but more slowly if the peers were of high absolute quality.

This provides further problems with providing validity with a fair and robust predictor of quality for promotion. Other factors not identified in the current process are the “change in effort or a change in the factors required for promotion, e.g., the ability to lead, the ability to communicate clearly, or the ability to work in teams, could lead to a change in the estimate of unobserved quality” (Hosek and Warner, 2003). For example, officers are only starting to “shape” at Captain, and a noticeable shift in competencies is required at Major in accordance with the changing responsibilities identified in the leadership pipeline model.

#### **4. Study by Vasquez and Williams (2001)**

##### ***a. USMC***

Vasquez and Williams provided a paper that attempted to determine if the USMC promotion system required reengineering to mitigate in some part against the current problem that the USMC faces with some skills being “critically short while others exceed requirements” (2001, v). They stated that the aim of the USMC promotion policy is to promote the “best and fully qualified” (2001, 38).

Therein lies the main challenge and a key issue for this paper. Possibly, the best may be getting promoted; however, the “fully qualified” are not being assigned to the appropriate jobs. They provided a very detailed description of the USMC officer promotion system, as well as an examination of the “operations of the officer promotion systems of the Navy, Army and Air Force” (2001, v).

The study focused on areas around “force structuring concerns” (2001, 11). Vasquez and Williams note that “manpower staffers are continually facing the dilemma of placing a junior Marine in a senior billet” (2001, 9) because suitably qualified officers in the requisite MOS are not available. They continue, “when manpower staffers are forced to ‘satisfice’ on these requirements, they are decreasing the commander’s ability to perform the mission” (2001, 9). To mitigate against these

‘vacancies’ the USMC staff a number of agencies to provide guidance and planning for the future of the USMC.

The Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC) determines the staffing requirements based upon current and projected war-fighting concepts. This output is called the Table of Manpower Requirements (TMR) and is managed by the Total Force Structure Division of MCCDC. The Manpower Plans and Policy Division (MPD) of the Manpower Reserve Affairs Department (MRA) formulates the “Marine Corps force manpower plans” (2001, 3).

Personnel are distributed to units based upon priority. “The number of future billets or ideal inventory is identified in the Grade Adjusted Recapitulation (GAR)” (2001, 7). This account considers a range of explanatory variables, such as promotion and attrition rates.

Vasquez and Williams echo the well-worn adage of “ensuring that the right Marine gets to the right job, with the right training, at the right time” (2001, 10). To this end, they note that the grade of Colonel is assigned a new MOS “which reflects the more generalized nature of their duties” (2001, 12). This re-categorization infers that the distribution of skills at the rank of Colonel is sufficiently well-rounded to suffice assignment to any Colonel-grade position in the USMC. This inference is discussed in more detail later.

The history of the USMC unrestricted officer promotion process includes the Officer Personnel Act of 1947 that states the “elimination” of the “weak officer” as one of the goals of the officer promotion system (2001, 23). The verb “elimination” conveys an active sense of removal. This goal belies an unproven faith in the validity and efficacy of the officer promotion system whereby, default only, the weaker officer will attrite due to lack of promotion. There are many varied reasons why officers leave the service, and they are not all attributable to poor performance.

Withal, Vasquez and Williams note that a 1994 issue paper for the General Officer Symposium stated that “no significant progress had been made toward achieving the objective” (2001, 15) of achieving the right amount of officers in each grade and

MOS. The authors conclude that “one could argue that while the system is designed to keep the best Marines, the system is hindering MOS proficiency and experience” (2001, 17).

***b. United States Navy***

Vasquez and Williams advise that the United States Navy (USN) established three premises in the “development process of the officer personnel and promotion systems: equity, efficiency, and economy” (2001, 39). The authors claim that “efficiency referred to what is actually considered ‘effectiveness’ today” (2001, 40). This interpretation is contended upon operational management doctrine. At the simplest level, ‘effectiveness’ may be considered as ‘doing the right job’, and ‘efficiency’ as ‘using the right tool’. Therefore, there are salient differences in the application of these two words, even though they are used interchangeably by the unlearned every day.

Nonetheless, the premises are highly significant in the development of promotion systems for the USN due to the increasingly technical and specialized nature of the USN. Vasquez and Williams summarize as follows: “The Navy was becoming such a complex organization that no generalist officer, no matter how talented, could be expected to adequately perform the specialized tasks required while, conversely, staff officers were increasingly discontent with their relegation to a second-class status, without rank or command authority” (2001, 45).

At this juncture it may be worthy to note that the advent of effects-based operations has more tightly interwoven the application of naval war-fighting capability into the modern battle-space. In the 200 mile littoral where sea meets air and land, the USN has played a significant operational role in recent military theatres. This point is made to highlight the need to continue to place emphasis on war-fighting capability and experience in the senior ranks. This does not detract from the staff officer contribution; however, it must also be recognized that a highly qualified and experienced information technology officer will provide considerable comparative advantage to the USN by remaining in his/her air-conditioned office developing interoperable communications systems and other technologies.



Vasquez and Williams concluded that the USN “clearly . . . choose efficiency of the organization over equity (a strong concern of the USMC) of the individual” (2001, 60). “The basic concern of the Marine leaders [in choosing equity before efficiency] would be the effect on the Marine Corps war-fighting culture if there was a perceived disparity in the promotion process” (2001, 53). The authors suggest that the USMC may improve force-structuring by adjusting their policy from “best and fully qualified” to “best fitted and most fully qualified” (2001, 60). At least, this approach would appear to provide a more realistic promotion process for the USMC given the concerns with insufficiently qualified officers. Best fitted could be assisted by a weighted criteria system that recognizes that there are different fits for different MOSs.

*c. United States Army*

Vasquez and Williams stated that the United States Army (US Army) also had a tendency to “command track” (2001, 64). “High officer turnover rates” and “lack of experience in functional areas” were the main areas of concern. The authors outline the US Army promotion concept:

The basic concept of the promotion selection system is to select for promotion those officers who have demonstrated that they possess the professional and moral qualifications, integrity, physical fitness, and ability required to successfully perform the duties expected of an officer in the next higher grade.

Promotion is not intended to be a reward for long, honorable service in the present grade, but is based on overall demonstrated performance and potential abilities (2001, 70).

Vasquez and Williams also note a similar shift in culture for the US Army towards new technologies and changing job descriptions. They note:

The Army’s “muddy boots” culture is being replaced with a technology-dominated culture. The “muddy boots” culture is characterized by basic soldiering, almost synonymous with the Marine Corps’ “Every Marine a rifleman.” The technology-dominated sub-culture allows officers to stovepipe in a specific skill at the expense of general warfighting skills.

The OPMS XXI [Officer Personnel management System] has taken measures to develop its warfighting capability to adapt to emerging

technological changes in the future. By recognizing the differences between warfighters and specialists, cultural changes may develop. Because promotion opportunities are to improve for non-operational career fields, those officers might perform at higher levels since more time will be afforded for skill development. On the other hand, operational career fields might feel more slighted than specialists whose less “well-rounded” performance records are guaranteed opportunities for promotion by virtue of their career field.

If such a system were adopted by the Marine Corps, this could be a major concern because any perceived imbalance in promotion equity, could hinder the cohesion of the Marine Corps and team building might suffer in the long run. Successful recruiting over the past decade shows that individuals are attracted to the warfighting culture of the Marine Corps. For this reason, an impact to the Marine Corps’ culture may be greater than an impact to the cultures of the other services (2001, 71).

*d. United States Airforce*

Vasquez and Williams identify a similarity between the United States Air Force (USAF) and the USMC promotion systems in that “they both have a ‘best qualified’ promotion standard” (2000, 73). However, one salient difference exists between the US Air Force and the USMC:

The Line of the Air Force has about 40 different technical specialties, which have also been referred to as “tribes.” Job communities have been described as tribes because officers are more likely to identify with their technical specialty than they are to simply being an Air Force officer. This is a sharp contrast to the Marine Corps, where officers identify with the Marine Corps before they identify with their occupational specialty (2000, 81).

This observation defers back to the equity element of the USMC promotion system that implies a sense of looking out for each other – which may also explain in some part the continuing challenge of score creep in FITREP scores. Perhaps there is a trade-off between cohesiveness [equity] and so-called ‘best-qualified’ in promotion and assignment processes? Vasquez and Williams state:

The greatest similarity between the Air Force and Marine Corps promotion systems is that the Line of the Air Force closely resembles the Marine Corps unrestricted officer community and holds a preponderance of the officer population. Another similarity is that within these competitive categories, field-grade officers are promoted on a best-and-

fully qualified basis and well-rounded officers usually do better than those who have been stove-piped in specific technical specialties (2000, 85).

Vasquez and Williams conclude from the USAF studies that “it appears that the more a service concentrates on technical specialties, the harder it is to form a cohesive organization” (2000, 85). This becomes a challenge where this concentration may detract from the morale component of fighting power which, it may be argued, is more necessary in a foxhole – than in an air-conditioned cockpit on a four hour mission from a firm base miles to the rear of the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA).

## **5. Conclusion**

Vasquez and Williams introduce new material in their conclusion that refers to particular criteria that are to be met in accordance with the Secretary of Navy Instruction 1400.1A, “which governs officer competitive categories for active-duty members of the Navy and Marine Corps” (2000, 87).

Two of these criteria open up a whole new area of analysis about specialized education for narrow technical career fields. They conclude that “it would be difficult to argue that Marine officers in any MOS have such a ‘narrow utilization’ that it becomes impossible for them to compete for promotion on an equitable basis” (2000, 88).

However, Vasquez and Williams provide a condition for promotion that is based upon the MOS qualification and experience:

The current Marine Corps standard of “best and fully qualified” carries that denotation that officers are selected for promotion based on their potential to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the next higher grade. This definition underscores the notion that the duties of a Marine officer are directly tied to his/her rank and not to his/her military occupation. The change to a “best and fully qualified per MOS system,” or more appropriately called a “best fitted” system would implicitly mean that the duties of a Marine officer are tied to his/her MOS and that the most qualified officer, given billet vacancies, is the officer whose level of experience and training best prepares him/her to assume the responsibilities of officers that have vacated the grade and billets in question.

The benefit of a promotion by MOS system is that it would be easier to compare fitness report evaluations and separate the top performing officers from the average performing officers. Under the current system it is difficult to equate an officer’s outstanding performance as an infantry

officer with another officer's outstanding performance as a finance officer. If the records of two supply officers were compared, especially by a senior Marine in the supply field, it would be easier to assess what had been required of the officer, how he or she performed, and which officer was best prepared for the increased responsibilities of the next higher grade. A promotion by MOS system also provides a more balanced approach to meeting all MOS requirements by ensuring that the force is grade shaped at every promotion point (2000,93)

An alternative to this approach may be the establishment of a weighted competency approach where particular competencies of the FITREP are recognized as being more necessary for success in a particular MOS before another. One of the aims of this paper is to determine if such differences occur. Withal, Vasquez and Williams highlight valid issues for consideration with any discussion that concerns promotion systems of the DoD.

In summary, these are:

- There needs to be a balance in the determination process that weighs up the cultural requirements of a particular service with the more technical nature of the battlefield today. However, Vasquez and Williams believe that the Navy "has proven that an efficiency based system does not necessarily equate to an unfair or inequitable system" (2000, 95).
- Further discussion is required on the potential utility of career field designations, whilst recognizing that 'war-fighters' will continue to require well-rounded experience and qualifications.
- "The timing of the lateral move is an important issue because of its effect on retention" (2000, 95).
- Promotion systems will always be subject to political impositions.
- "Manpower planners should focus their attention on how to best change the value premise of the organization and then explore options that will also address short-run concerns" (2000, 96).

This paper will also attempt to address the last bulleted point with some discussion directed towards the changing leadership requirements in an organization as leaders progress up the chain of responsibility. It is proposed that such things as value premises become more important to organizational leaders as they increase their reach of responsibility within an organization.

## **6. Study by Wielsma (1996)**

Wielsma studies the performance of graduate USMC officers. Using nonparametric, ordinary least squares (OLS), and non-linear maximum likelihood (PROBIT) techniques, Wielsma's results "suggest that actual on-the-job performance is an important factor in determining promotion, retention, and who attends graduate education" (1996, i). Wielsma outlines the general assignment road for a USMC officer (1996, 3):

Generally, the second assignment is in a non-FMF billet such as recruiting duty, independent duty, or duty with a Marine Corps Base activity. By the third assignment, the officer has normally reached the rank of Captain (O-3) and usually returns to an operational command in the FMF within his or her occupational specialty. Then, once an officer becomes eligible for promotion to Major (O-4), some sort of headquarters staff assignment is most likely.

Wielsma continues to note that, "conceptually, the more time spent in one's MOS and in the FMF ensures that an individual is fully trained and qualified to perform successfully in an operational environment" (1996, 4). Wielsma refers to a range of proxy variables for performance measures. He notes that "promotion and retention are simply observed outcomes of an individual's performance and may not be useful in predicting the true effects of graduate education on on-the-job performance" (1996, 15). He defers to the USMC performance appraisal system (FITREP) for use as an independent variable, "since promotion and retention are outcomes of actual performance and not pure measures of performance" (1996, 4). Wielsma references Wise (1975) who established a model stating that "performance measures are a function of cognitive skills, affective traits, and demographic characteristics" (1996, 7).

As stated previously, "Officers are selected for promotion for their potential to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the next higher grade based upon past performance as indicated in their official military personnel file" (MARCORPROMMAN). Stated another way, the purpose of the FITREP is to determine high quality officers for promotion.

Interestingly, there is little attention given to the FITREP as a development tool. Wielsma defines a "high quality officer" as one who has "already been defined as one

who chooses to remain in the USMC, one who is promoted, an one who has a higher performance average than his or her peers” (1996), 19). This statement belies another potential problem with the promotion system.

Officers are sometimes referred to as being ‘sponsored’ or ‘groomed’ by senior mentors in the organization. This “pre-selection” may tend to overestimate the effectiveness of a particular officer, who may even be selected ahead of other officers based on a “stabbed with the glory bayonet” approach to promotion. Groupthink influences about the stereotypical military officer may hold sway over an objective assessment.

Wielsma also notes that “we would expect that average performance would increase over time as the level of work experience increases, just as we would expect that the variance in the average performance of the sample would decrease as officers with lower performance averages separate from the Marine Corps” (1996, 21). This is an expected trend in the FITREP data.

The leadership pipeline framework acknowledges that the proficiency and application skills of leaders will strengthen as they progress through the organization. However, Charan does not note (as does Wielsma) that the variance in the average performance of officers will tighten as lower performers attrite from the organization.

## **K. DATA**

### **1. Data Source**

The data used in this study was drawn from the USMC Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) provided by the Headquarters, United States Marine Corps located in Washington, D.C. Each unit of observation is a USMC officer who was reported on during the period 1999 to 2004. Each record has an update which allows for longitudinal analysis. Each record of observation is an individual officer who was serving in the USMC during that period. The data included FITREPs for the ranks of Sergeant (SGT) to Major General (MAJGEN). Descriptive statistics showed that the ranks of Brigadier general (BRIGGEN) and Major General (MAJGEN) did not have scores for the FITREP competencies. Therefore, only the ranks of 2LT to Colonel (COL)

were studied in this analysis. A variable description is provided at sub-paragraph F. The records were grouped by the Marine Officer Specialty (MOS) as follows:

Table 20. USMA MOS Community

Variable	MOS	Description
COMBAT	03XX	Infantry
	08XX	Artillery
SERVICE	34XX	Finance
	44XX	Legal Services
SUPPORT	04XX	Logistics
	25XX	Communications

Source: <http://www.duprel.com/usmcgeocitiespaid/occupa2.html>

Two MOS from each service category were kept. The remaining MOS were removed from the dataset. In order to mitigate against potential bias, any record that did not have an observation was omitted from the data set. Cross-tabulation provided the following information in Table 21 about the number of records remaining in the dataset.

Table 21. Record Information from Data Set

Calendar Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	499	761	715	693	636	336
1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	1,665	1,636	1,707	1,738	1,766	938
Captain	1,644	1,697	1,773	1,853	1,850	1,175
Major	1,248	1,264	1,274	1,184	1,281	722
Lieutenant Colonel	552	635	671	668	749	465
Colonel	13	25	22	3	Nil	Nil
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,621</b>	<b>6,018</b>	<b>6,162</b>	<b>6,139</b>	<b>6,282</b>	<b>3,636</b>

<b>Combat</b>						
- Infantry	2,266	2,419	2,487	2,457	2,494	1,343
- Artillery	850	853	832	848	814	480
<b>Service</b>						
- Finance	231	238	243	252	239	145
- Legal Services	221	234	223	242	260	153
<b>Support</b>						
- Logistics	1,293	1,441	1,479	1,399	1,511	923
- Communications	760	833	898	941	964	592
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,621</b>	<b>6,018</b>	<b>6,162</b>	<b>6,139</b>	<b>6,282</b>	<b>3,636</b>

Figure 15 shows the data record numbers, by rank, per year. Because of the limited number of COL records the dataset was revisited and the COL records removed. The data set was received Thursday, September 16, 2004. The last ‘to-date’ for the FITREPS is September 30, 2004, which demonstrates that the last FITREP was postdated for the reporting period.

All entries where there were scores missing or unobserved were cleansed from the data set. The *Individual Courage* competency consists of both a moral and a physical component. In peacetime, the physical component may often be an unobserved quantity. Therefore, the *Individual Courage* competency will likely be reported as unobserved more often than the other competencies. The cleansing of the data set may lead to a bias towards FITREPS that were evaluated during combat which would have included the physical component of the *Individual Courage* competency. However, this does not detract from the significance of the analysis – because combat is inevitably the focus of the USMC mission.

Figure 15 below also shows that the number of FITREPS submitted each year has been increasing slightly over the past four years. The increase may be attributed to increasing operational commitments by the USMC, for example, the second deployment of the USMC 1<sup>st</sup> Division in three years.

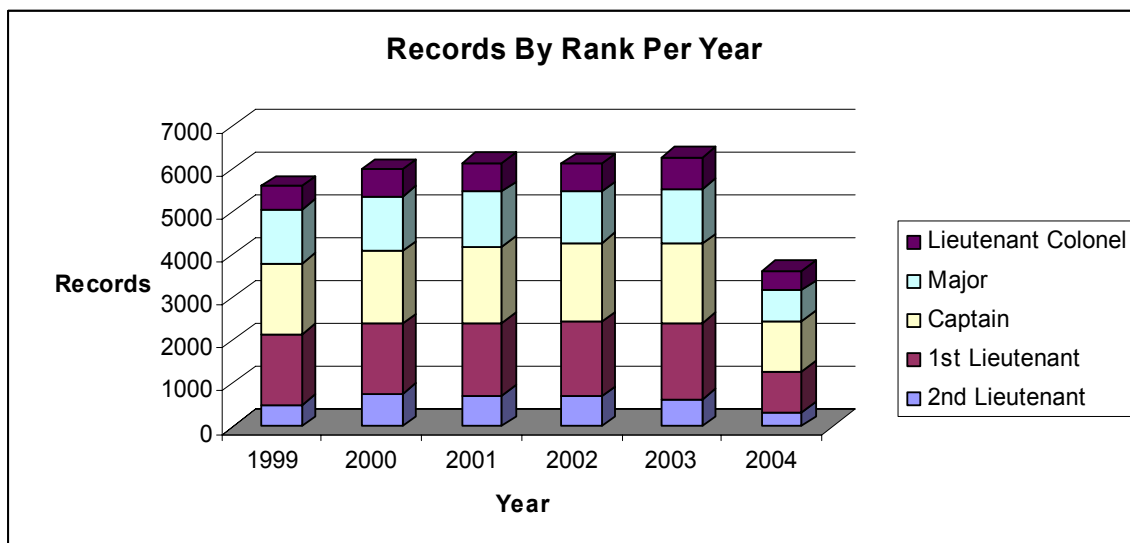


Figure 15. Records By Rank Per Year



Finally, the number of records per MOS were also analyzed to ensure that sufficient records existed for suitable statistical comparison. Some MOS were excluded on this observation. Additionally, an equal number of MOS from each arm of the USMC were selected; that is, combat, combat support, and combat service support. The MOS selected are outlined in Table 22.

## **2. Data Limitations**

This analysis is not concerned with the performance of officers, per se. It is mostly directed towards establishing what competencies have more significance across specific MOS. All the records with ‘not observed’ entries in them were also removed. This may create some bias with respect to identifying key competencies for difference MOS because other competency scores are removed with the deletion of the unobserved competency. A potential bias from source of MOS may also exist. Different types of officers apply for different MOS.

Colloquial evidence from USMC TBS graduates at NPS state that the better performing officers often apply for combat arms MOS. The concept is that the Combat Arms is more challenging, both physically and mentally, and requires considerable leadership development to command soldiers on operations. Therefore, better performance may be expected of the combat arms officers and, consequently, they may be assessed more rigorously by their superiors.

The corollary of this informal observation is that some MOS may be valued more highly, and therefore we may expect a different assessment regime. Wielsma states that, “on average, those officers who graduate in the top of their TBS class have a greater taste for life as a Marine Corps officer than those who graduate at the bottom” (1996, 18). (However, as identified in chapter two of this study, this does not mean that they are guaranteed to stay in the USMC longer than other officers). They also receive their preferences and may demonstrate a homogeneous taste for the military. This may infer a preexisting propensity for reporting officers to rate more highly those officers who were commissioned into competitive positions.

However, the USMC gives the following guidance, “Inflated markings, patronizing comments, and other techniques designed to game the system and give the

MRO an undeserved advantage over contemporaries are acts of misplaced loyalty and ultimately hurt the institution” (MCO P1610.7E, 1998, 2-4).

The MCO P1610.7E also states that “Reporting Officers (ROs) will direct Reporting Supervisors (RSs) to clarify or modify reports that . . . appear to contain inflated marks” (MCO P1610.7E, 1998, 2-5). Because information accumulates about a member’s quality each time they are promoted, then this propensity may portend a strong overestimation of a member’s ability in the long run. Whilst discussing potential challenges with the promotion system it is also appropriate to recognize that sometimes members may be promoted early due to the so-called “slip of a pen” (Hosek and Warner, 2003). Hosek and Warner (2003) state:

We can use the information from two (or more) promotion times to distinguish the effect of quality from simple luck. By looking at the correlation of promotion times across two or more promotions within a population, we can identify the random component and isolate the quality factor from simple random error.

There are inherent bias problems in this case with member’s who attrite after being promoted early; however, as noted by Hosek and Warner, “Members with a greater comparative advantage in the military tend to stay in the military, while those with a greater comparative advantage in the civilian world tend to leave” (2003). Therefore, we can reasonably expect that those members who are promoted early may generally tend to stay in the service long enough for the ‘random error’ to be identified.

“Previous studies have shown that there are significant differences between cohorts” (Wielsma, 1996, 61). This effect has not been analyzed in this study. Also noted by Wielsma, “The fitness report does not contain [. . .] an officer’s ranking amongst his or her peers, important information that is also used in the promotion decision” (1996, 61). Also, the amount of time an officer spends in his or her primary MOS is not identified, which would reasonably be expected to strengthen the competency scores with the length of time.

Biases presented by different reporting officers were discussed earlier; suffice to say that, even without an adjustment system as implemented by the USMC, we may expect some moderation of the assessment biases over time.

### 3. Variable Definitions

The variables are as defined as follows:

Table 22. Variables

Description	Variable	Coded
<b>MOS</b>		
• Infantry	infantry	0300 – 0399 = Infantry
• Logistics	logistics	0800 – 0899 = Logistics
• Communications	comms	3400 – 3499 = Comms
• Artillery	artillery	4000 – 4099 = Artillery
• Finance	finance	4400 – 4499 = Finance
• Legal	legal	0400 – 0499 = Legal
<b>Performance Measures (FITREP)</b>		Scored: 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest).
<b>D. Mission Accomplishment</b>		
• Performance	mission_perform	
• Proficiency	mission_profic	
<b>E. Individual Character</b>		
• Courage	indiv_courage	
• Effectiveness Under Stress	indiv_effective	
• Initiative	indiv_initiative	
<b>F. Leadership</b>		
• Leading Subordinates	leader_leading	
• Developing Subordinates (Sub.)	leader_develop	
• Setting the Example	leader_set_example	
• Ensuring the Well-being of Sub.	leader_well_being	
• Communication Skills	leader_leading	
<b>G. Intellect and Wisdom</b>		
• Professional Military Education	intellect_pme	
• Decision Making Ability	intellect_pme	
• Judgment	intellect_pme	
<b>H. Fulfilment of Eval<sup>n</sup> Resp.</b>		
• Evaluation	fulfillment_evaluations	
<b>Year</b>		If to_date = YYYYMMDD
• 1999	fy_1999	fy1999 = 1; else fy1999 = 0;
• 2000	fy_2000	= 1; else = 0
• 2001	fy_2001	= 1; else = 0
• 2002	fy_2002	= 1; else = 0
• 2003	fy_2003	= 1; else = 0
• 2004	fy_2004	= 1; else = 0

<b>Description</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coded</b>
<b>Rank</b>		
Second Lieutenant	seclt	= 1 if Second Lieutenant; 0 otherwise
First Lieutenant	firstlt	= 1 if First Lieutenant; 0 otherwise
Captain	capt	= 1 if Captain; 0 otherwise
Major	maj	= 1 if Major; 0 otherwise
Lieutenant Colonel	ltcol	= 1 if Lieutenant Colonel; 0 otherwise

Because there has been no previous research conducted on the reporting differences across different FITREP competencies, it is very difficult to hypothesize effects. However, we can expect the average score for USMC officers to improve as they progress through the chain of command, based on Ergun's findings that the PI improved with higher rank (2003, 69). This effect is expected with the individual competencies as officers gain experience and skills with tenure (2003, 109-110). However, the effects of these improvements across ranks and MOS are unknown, and it is hoped that some knowledge of these effects will be gained from this analysis.

## **L. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS**

### **1. Descriptive statistics**

Table 23 highlights the means of 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenants (1LT) and LTCOL scores, by MOS, across each of the fourteen areas of competency on the FITREP. The maximum and minimum averages are highlighted below. Some MOS appear to have generally lower or higher average scores. For example, 1LTs in the Finance MOS have regularly higher scores across the FITREP competencies than other MOS. However, another observation is that the same MOS has noticeably lower FITREP scores than the other MOS at the rank of LTCOL.

The average score across all ranks and MOS appear at the top of the table. Again, there appears to be very little variation in the average FITREP score. The range of

difference (Maximum – Minimum) is 0.86, less than 13% of the total available score. *Mission Performance* (4.46), *Individual Initiative* (4.32), and *Mission Proficiency* (4.21) have the three highest mean scores in order. *Professional Military Education* (3.60), *Individual Courage* (3.88), and *Evaluation* (3.92) are the three lowest mean scores (from lowest up).

Multiple comparison tests were conducted on each of the fourteen competencies in order to test if the differences between the means of the MOSs were statistically significant. Bonferroni pair-wise comparisons were used to correct for multiplicity of tests. The results summarized in Table 24 shows the difference in mean score of MOS groups significant at the 0.05 level on the Bonferroni pair-wise multiple comparison test. The Bonferroni pair-wise comparisons did not discriminate on the basis of rank. Table 28 shows the group means.

Figure 16, Figure 17, and Figure 18 confirm that there also appears to be a similar pattern in reporting across each of the selected MOSs. For example, in the MOSs studied in these figures, i.e., infantry, communications, and legal - the attributes of *Mission Proficiency*, *Individual Initiative*, and *Communication* have higher average FITREP scores relative to other competencies on the FITREP report. Does this provide some lead on the generic key competencies for the organization as questioned earlier? Are these competencies more highly valued than other competencies for the USMC in achieving organizational goals?

1. The top line of each MOS represents the average score for all ranks in the specified MOS.

Table 23. Average FITREP Scores for each Competency by MOS and Rank

	Mission Performance	Mission Proficiency	Individual Courage	Individual Effectiveness	Individual Initiative	Leading Subordinates	Developing Subordinates	Setting the Example	Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates	Communication	Professional Military Education	Decision Making Ability	Judgment	Evaluation
Average <sup>1</sup>	4.46	4.21	3.88	3.94	4.32	4.13	3.93	4.18	4.06	4.08	3.60	4.07	4.07	3.92
<b>Infantry</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>4.32</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>3.97</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>4.04</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>4.06</b>	<b>3.88</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.14	3.91	3.59	3.65	4.02	3.83	3.65	3.87	3.76	3.70	3.20	3.78	3.74	3.65
LTCOL	5.23	4.96	4.59	4.66	5.02	4.91	4.65	4.81	4.71	4.84	4.51	4.82	4.82	4.46
Range	1.09	1.05	1.00	1.01	1.01	1.08	1.00	0.94	0.95	1.14	1.31	1.04	1.08	0.81
<b>Logistics</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>3.89</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>4.04</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>3.93</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.09	3.75	3.52	3.59	3.98	3.76	3.51	3.84	3.78	3.72	3.13	3.70	3.70	3.68
LTCOL	5.14	4.96	4.52	4.55	5.01	4.80	4.62	4.81	4.72	4.71	4.33	4.76	4.76	4.55
Range	1.05	1.21	1.01	0.96	1.03	1.04	1.11	0.97	0.94	0.99	1.20	1.06	1.06	0.88
<b>Comms</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>3.79</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>3.56</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>3.99</b>	<b>3.88</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.07	3.86	3.48	3.55	3.94	3.72	3.55	3.83	3.70	3.76	3.16	3.68	3.64	3.57
LTCOL	5.24	5.00	4.54	4.55	5.06	4.81	4.61	4.74	4.66	4.86	4.44	4.76	4.78	4.49
Range	1.18	1.14	1.06	1.00	1.12	1.09	1.06	0.91	0.95	1.10	1.28	1.07	1.14	0.91
<b>Artillery</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>3.87</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>3.53</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>3.92</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.10	3.89	3.56	3.67	3.95	3.75	3.55	3.82	3.70	3.65	3.05	3.74	3.72	3.65
LTCOL	5.19	4.95	4.53	4.63	5.05	4.82	4.63	4.79	4.67	4.78	4.43	4.79	4.79	4.46
Range	1.08	1.06	0.97	0.95	1.10	1.07	1.09	0.97	0.98	1.13	1.37	1.05	1.07	0.81
<b>Finance</b>	<b>4.53</b>	<b>4.29</b>	<b>3.98</b>	<b>4.03</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>4.07</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>4.19</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.26	3.99	3.70	3.77	4.24	3.91	3.80	4.18	4.02	3.97	3.41	3.90	3.91	4.04
LTCOL	5.04	4.97	4.48	4.48	4.84	4.68	4.59	4.66	4.60	4.64	4.28	4.70	4.74	4.49
Range	0.78	0.99	0.79	0.71	0.59	0.77	0.79	0.47	0.58	0.66	0.87	0.80	0.83	0.46
<b>Legal</b>	<b>4.88</b>	<b>4.65</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>4.32</b>	<b>4.67</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>4.54</b>	<b>4.39</b>	<b>4.74</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>4.61</b>	<b>4.17</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.13	3.72	3.80	3.72	3.93	3.78	3.50	4.09	3.85	4.37	3.00	3.93	4.09	3.80
LTCOL	5.30	5.05	4.64	4.60	5.01	4.82	4.71	4.84	4.70	5.05	4.55	4.86	4.98	4.44
Range	1.17	1.33	0.83	0.88	1.08	1.04	1.21	0.75	0.85	0.68	1.55	0.93	0.90	0.64
1 <sup>st</sup> LT														
Max	4.26	3.99	3.80	3.77	4.24	3.91	3.80	4.18	4.02	4.37	3.41	3.93	4.09	4.04
Min	4.07	3.72	3.48	3.55	3.93	3.72	3.50	3.82	3.70	3.65	3.00	3.68	3.64	3.57
Range	0.19	0.27	0.33	0.22	0.31	0.19	0.30	0.36	0.33	0.72	0.41	0.25	0.45	0.46
LTCOL														
Max	5.30	5.05	4.64	4.66	5.06	4.91	4.71	4.84	4.72	5.05	4.55	4.86	4.98	4.55
Min	5.04	4.95	4.48	4.48	4.84	4.68	4.59	4.66	4.60	4.64	4.28	4.70	4.74	4.44
Range	0.26	0.10	0.15	0.18	0.22	0.23	0.12	0.18	0.12	0.41	0.28	0.16	0.24	0.11

Table 24. Multiple Comparison Tests of MOS Means Results

	Infantry-Finance	Infantry-Legal	Infantry-Logistics	Infantry-Artillery	Infantry-Communications
<b>Mission Performance</b>	✓	✓			
<b>Mission Proficiency</b>	✓	✓	✓		
<b>Individual Courage</b>		✓	✓		✓
<b>Individual Effectiveness</b>	✓	✓	✓		✓
<b>Individual Initiative</b>	✓	✓			
<b>Leading Subordinates</b>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Dev Subordinates</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Setting the Example</b>	✓	✓			
<b>Ensure Well-being of Sub.</b>	✓	✓			✓
<b>Communication</b>	✓	✓			
<b>Professional Mil. Ed.</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Decision Making Ability</b>	✓	✓			✓
<b>Judgment</b>	✓	✓			✓
<b>Evaluation</b>	✓	✓	✓		

✓= Statistical Difference of MOS Means at the 0.05 level.

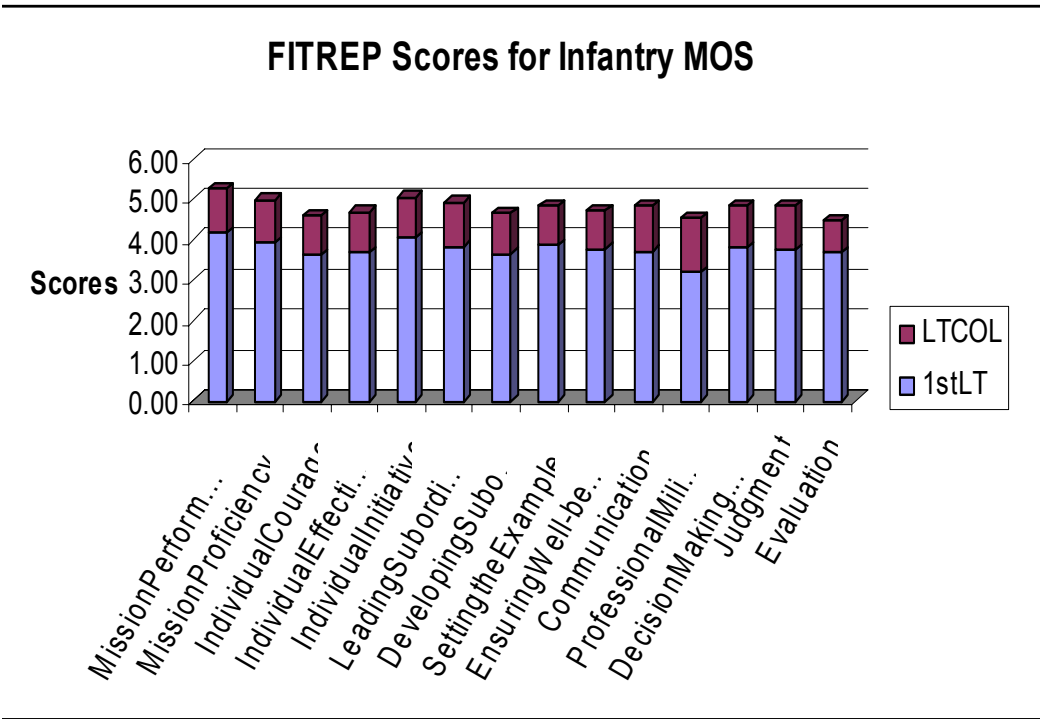


Figure 16. Average FITREP Scores for 1<sup>st</sup> LT and LTCOL for Infantry MOS

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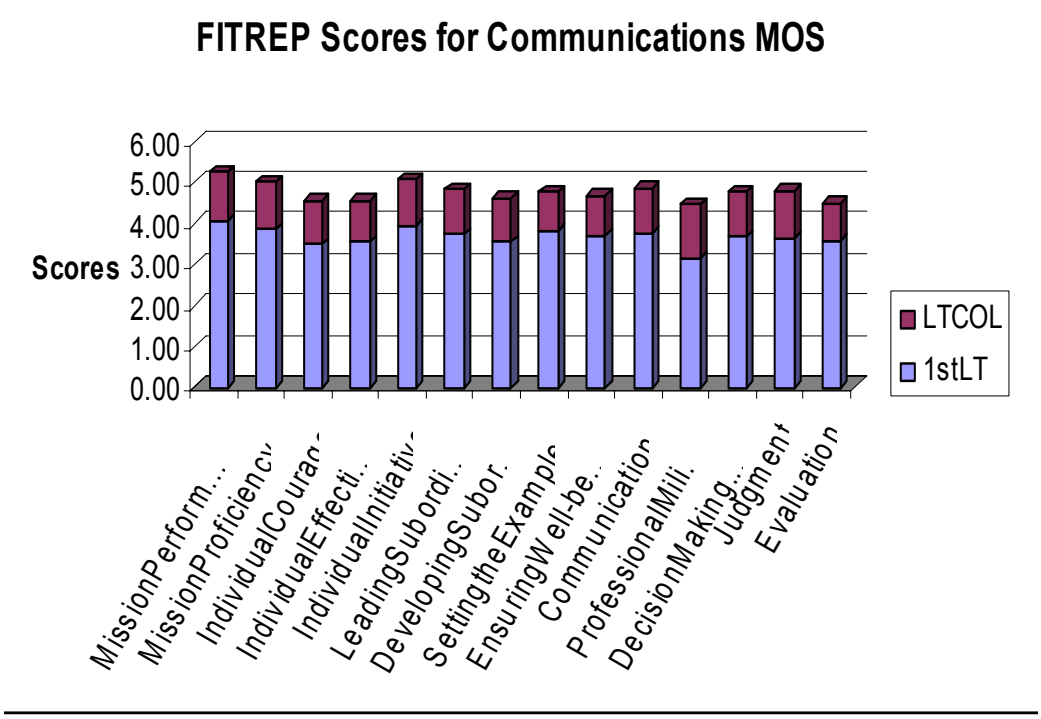


Figure 17. Average FITREP Scores for 1<sup>st</sup> LT and LTCOL for Comms MOS

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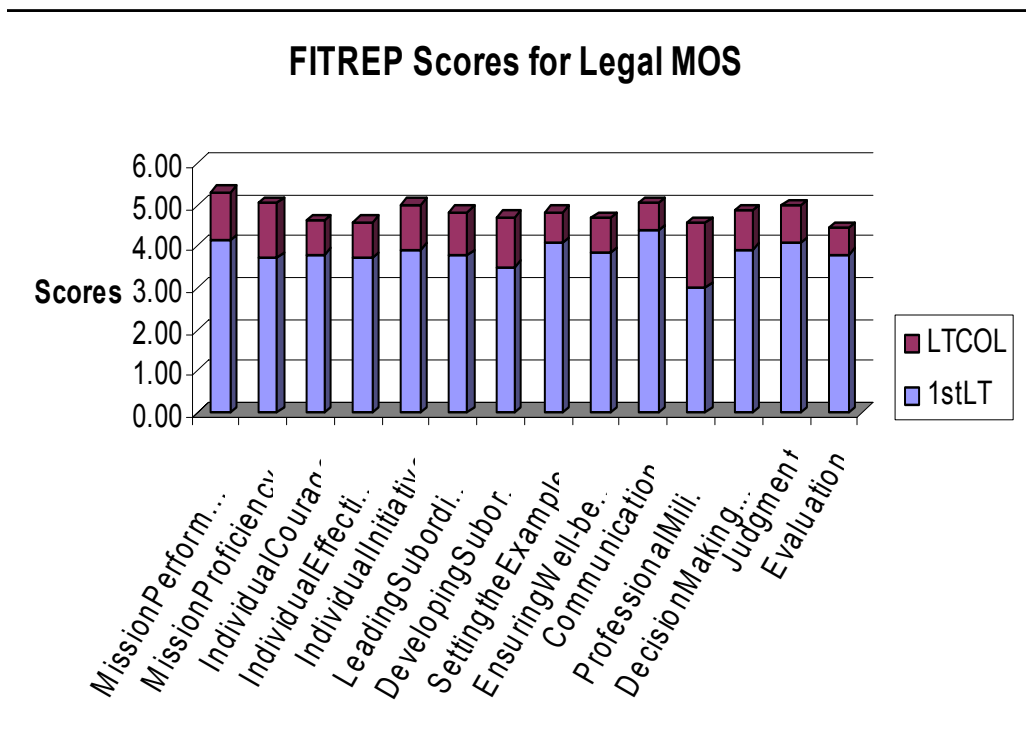


Figure 18. Average FITREP Scores for 1<sup>st</sup> LT and LTCOL for Legal MOS

## 2. Initial Support for Hypothesis

There appears to be a consistent trend in improving FITREP scores as USMC officers progress through the ranks. This can be identified in each of the MOS analyzed above. This confirms Ergun's and Wielsma's findings that as USMC officers progress through the ranks their performance index (calculated as the sum of scores divided by the number of competencies assessed) improves.

We also notice that there is a difference in the average FITREP scores across competencies and MOS. The multiple comparison tests shown in Table 24 demonstrate that there are statistically significant differences between the means of many MOSs. Given the significant bivariate differences, a multivariate analysis was undertaken to evaluate the effect of MOS on FITREP scores while controlling for rank and fiscal year.

## M. MODEL

### 1. Model Discussion

The method selected for prediction is Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). If we can identify statistically significant differences in the reporting scores of USMC officers across MOS and ranks, then the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) may have additional utility. Models are developed to analyze if there is statistical significance in the reporting scores of USMC officers across the FITREP competencies by MOS and rank. A separate model will be run for each competency as a function of MOS and rank.

### 2. Model Specification

As stated previously, there have been no studies to date on the individual scores against FITREP competencies across MOS and ranks.

The general functional form for the original, and only model, is limited by the data provided. There are no additional variables available on the delivered data set that would add explanatory power to the general functional form as follows:

$$\text{FITREP Competency Score} = f(\text{MOS}, \text{rank})$$

Using *FITREP Competency Score* as the dependent variable, we can attempt to determine whether each MOS and rank has a different effect on the score.

For example:

$$\text{FITREP Competency Score} = f(\text{individual MOS characteristics and required competency predictors, experience and skills acquired with each rank in the chain of command})$$

For ease of explanation, we will only look at six MOS, Infantry (Base Case), Logistics, Communications, Artillery, Finance, and Legal; and the ranks of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant (2<sup>nd</sup> LT), which is the base case, through Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL).

FITREP Competency Score =  $f(MOS, rank)$   
 Base Case: Infantry MOS, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant.

The above model has no associated measurable variables that can be included as control variables. Variables that could have been included as a measure of previous success in military career or as proxies for ability include highest prior-enlisted rank, TBS, and GCT scores. Older data sets that include these variables are available, but a current data set that included data from 2000 to 2004 could not be obtained to merge the data. The inclusion of TBS results may have provided a good proxy for relative competitiveness, as the literature reviewed clearly demonstrated a relationship between the effect of TBS standing and promotion rates and, therefore, some measure of the performance of a USMC officer.

Although, the literature reviewed demonstrated a relationship between TBS standing and promotion rates, previous studies do not explore what level of increased performance is determined by the fact that the officer in the top third of each TBS profile received their MOS preference. This effect may be defined as “Preference Driven Performance” and is studied in chapter one.

To provide some control variables a dummy variables was established from the *to-date* variable. This was the closing date of each report. These control variables were established to try and capture some of the effects not included in the other variables, and were titled *fy1999 – fy2004* (with *fy1999* established as the base year). Regressions for all the competencies were run before the *fy* variables were established and, afterwards, with the *fy* control variables. The addition of the *fy* control variables added between 3-4% explanation on the coefficient of determination for each model.

Therefore, the final model form looked like this:

FITREP Competency Score =  $f(MOS, rank, fy)$   
 Base Case: Infantry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, *fy1999*.

### 3. Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that some FITREP competencies may be more important in one MOS than another. This is due to the fact that the job tasks vary significantly across different MOS. It is expected that these differences may be reflected in the FITREP scores for these competencies. Furthermore, it is expected that some MOSs will have both higher scores on some competencies and lower scores on other competencies when compared to the base case MOS. The analysis will consider the difference in reporting scores of USMC officers across MOS and rank.

This is defined by the following hypothesis:

H<sub>0</sub>: The average USMC FITNESS competency score is the same across MOS and ranks, *ceteris paribus*.

H<sub>1</sub>: The average USMC FITNESS competency score is not the same across MOS and ranks, *ceteris paribus*, i.e., any difference is dependent on MOS and rank.

For each of the explanatory variables listed in the model, Table 25 provides an indication of the hypothesized effect of each variable on the average FITREP score.

Table 25. Hypothesized Effects

Variable	Base	Data Type	Hypothesized Effects
<b>Rank</b>			
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	Base	Binary	NA
1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	2 <sup>nd</sup> LT	Binary	+
Captain	2 <sup>nd</sup> LT	Binary	+
Major	2 <sup>nd</sup> LT	Binary	+
Lieutenant Colonel	2 <sup>nd</sup> LT	Binary	+
<b>Combat</b>			
- Infantry	Base	Binary	NA
- Artillery	Infantry	Binary	?
<b>Service</b>			
- Finance	Infantry	Binary	?
- Legal Services	Infantry	Binary	?
<b>Support</b>			
- Logistics	Infantry	Binary	?
- Communications	Infantry	Binary	?

Variable	Base	Data Type	Hypothesized Effects
<b>Year</b>			
1999	Base	Binary	NA
2000	1999	Binary	+
2001	1999	Binary	+
2002	1999	Binary	+
2003	1999	Binary	+
2004	1999	Binary	+

**Rank.** The signs for each rank are positive because as USMC officers progress through the ranks it is expected that their accumulated experience and skills will allow them to improve in their reporting scores as reported in the literature review.

**Competencies.** It is difficult to accurately hypothesize the effects of MOS on the competencies. This is due to fact that the majority of the FITREPs are evaluations where the Reporting Senior has the same MOS as the Marine that is being reported on. Each community which is represented by a MOS will have a perception of what competency scores an average Marine should have. In a steady state environment it is assumed that each community or MOS will develop its own standard of competency scores for an average Marine within their MOS. Furthermore, it is assumed that a reporting officer will become more consistent with their perception of what an average Marine is as the reporting officer gains experience in evaluating his/her subordinates.

Although, it is difficult to accurately hypothesize the effects of MOS on the competencies, it is expected that certain MOSs will perceive certain competencies as more important than other MOSs. The survey conducted on Marine officers which is discussed in a following chapter is consistent with this expectation. Any hypothesis about the performance of different MOS across each competency is speculative based on the analyst's personal experience and bias.

**Year.** It is expected that the coefficients for fiscal year will be positive. Ergun conducted t-tests to study the change in average FITREP scores over the period 1999 to 2000. He reported the following results (Ergun, 2003, 70):

Both tests, however, reveal that the average PI increased in 2000 relative to 1999. For example, the first t-test reveals that the mean O-3 PI in 2000 was 1.65 points higher than that in 1999, whereas the paired t-test finds that PI averages in 2000 were 3.02 points higher than in 1999 for the same 2,103 officers. The results indicate that the new fitness report system is also subject to inflation. Even in two

years, the average PI increased between 0.8 and 2.35 percentage points. The new fitrep system may suffer from the inflation like the prior one if the trend continues in the future.

Ergun summarized his results with Table 26 (2003, 71):

Table 26. Difference in Means in PI Over Two Years

Grade	Difference in means in two samples				Difference in means in paired comparisons		
	Fitrep Year	N	Mean Difference	Significance Level ( $\alpha$ )	N	Mean Difference	P-Value
O-1	1999	1,489	1.7	0.05	518	7.26	<0.001
	2000	885					
O-2	1999	2,700	0.8	0.05	748	3.07	<0.001
	2000	1,553					
O-3	1999	4,702	1.65	0.05	2,103	3.02	<0.001
	2000	2,672					
O-4	1999	3,916	2.35	0.05	1,918	2.80	<0.001

**Infantry.** In this model, Infantry is the base case. Historically, most senior chiefs of the USMC have been chosen from the combat arms MOS. This trend is similar to the promotion trends of other developed military regimes, such as the United Kingdom and the Australian models. The historical argument for this selection is based upon the premise that the war-fighters are the main effort for the projection of power and effects in the modern battle-space. The remaining MOS (support and services) are described in administrative terms as “second-line” or “third-line” services. Therefore, it is imperative that the USMC have officers who know how to fight at the front end of business. The Infantry MOS is expected to have a positive effect on competency scores relative to other non- combat MOS.

**Artillery.** Artillery is a combat arms MOS. For similar reasons as previously described, they are expected to also have a positive effect on FITREP scores relative to other non-combat MOS.

**Support and Services.** These MOS are hypothesized to have a negative coefficient with FITREP scores relative to the combat arms MOS. This is because the USMC prides itself on leadership, and the ability to fight. The FITREP is weighted heavily towards these competencies with five of the 14 competencies directed towards leadership abilities.

There are salient differences in the levels of responsibility between an Infantry 2nd LT leading a platoon of 30 or more soldiers on operations in a fourth-generation war; and a Finance 2nd LT leading a small team of three marines and a non-commissioned officer in an air-conditioned pay cell on regular hours. This statement does not detract from the contribution of either officer. All are important in the military system. For example, if soldier's pay matters are not looked after in a timely, responsible, and professional matter – then it is highly likely that their “will to fight” (or, as it was known in the older doctrine – morale) is likely to wane.

However, the sophistication of responsibilities - in the application of skills, ethical reasoning, and human leadership can vary widely across the two responsibilities. From this rationale, it is reasonable to expect that the Infantry 2<sup>nd</sup> LT is likely to provide higher scores in the areas of responsibility that are more closely correlated with the business of war-fighting.

## N. MODEL RESULTS

### 1. Model Estimation Results

A model for each of the fourteen competencies was used to determine the effects of MOS, rank, and fiscal year on competency scores. Each model used OLS regression and used the same functional form shown below with the exception of varying the dependent variable of each FITREP competency.

$\text{FITREP Competency Score} = f(\text{MOS}, \text{rank}, \text{fy})$
--

<p>Base Case: Infantry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, 1999.</p>
--

The purpose of this model was to obtain some understanding of the effects of MOS and rank on FITNESS competency scores. There were no literature results to verify. A separate regression was conducted for each competency using the same functional form.

Table 27 shows the regression results for all 14 models. MOS variables were significant in all of the models, indicating that at least one MOS group had a significantly different score from that of a Marine in an Infantry MOS, the base case, for every competency. A Marine in an Artillery MOS received a FITREP score significantly different from that of a Marine in an Infantry MOS, the base case, for all but one competency. The same was true for a Marine in a Communications MOS. Marines in Legal, Finance, and Logistics MOS groups received

significantly different scores than those in an Infantry MOS in the *Setting an Example*, *Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates*, and *Communication* competencies, respectively, ceteris paribus.

The coefficients for the MOS were mostly negative with relationship to the MOS *Infantry* which demonstrated that the choice of infantry as a base case was appropriate and allowed for easy comparisons. The results show that FITREP competency scores are strongly influenced by MOS. Furthermore, these results support the hypothesis that certain competencies are more important to certain MOSs.

The coefficients of the ranks were also all increasingly positive, from 1LT to LTCOL, which was the expected result. The differences in the significant coefficients across the competencies and at the level of LTCOL ranged from 1.04 for *Evaluation* to 1.56 for *Mission Proficiency*. A Marine whose rank is above the base case rank of 2LT has a significantly higher score on each of the 14 competencies, ceteris paribus. In each regression the intercept represents the base case, and the interpretation of estimated coefficients should be relative to this case.

The third highest coefficient for LTCOL was *Professional Military Education* (PME). At this rank, or just prior to it, USMC officers have a range of staff and civilian courses that they can complete that may account for the higher PME results. The only FITREP competencies that produced significant coefficients for all MOS and ranks were the two intellect competencies: *Decision Making Ability*, and *Judgment*, and a leadership competency, *Setting the Example*.

Increasing coefficients for each of the fiscal year variables confirms Ergun's findings that the average score for every competency of the FITREP has continued to improve relative to the base case of 1999. The largest trend in 'reporting creep' is found in *Mission Performance*, *Mission Proficiency* and *Individual Initiative*. The least 'reporting creep' is found in *Setting the Example* and *Evaluation*. This portends some challenges for the USMC where, in the long run, the acuity that the FITREP provides will lessen with each following year as it becomes more difficult to clearly demarcate between higher and lower quality officers.



\* indicates significance at  $\alpha=0.10$   
 \*\* indicates significance at  $\alpha=0.05$   
 \*\*\* indicates significance at  $\alpha=0.01$   
 All significance levels are two tailed.

Table 27. Regression Outputs for Each FITREP Competency as a function of MOS and RANK

	Mission Performance	Mission Proficiency	Individual Courage	Individual Effectiveness	Individual Initiative	Leading Subordinates	Developing Subordinates	Setting the Example	Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates	Communication	Professional Military Education	Decision Making Ability	Judgment	Evaluation
<b>Intercept</b>	3.42058***	3.16025***	3.09372***	3.04718***	3.4024***	3.28403***	3.09058	3.41388***	3.23714***	3.1494***	2.77963***	3.11626***	3.14701***	3.29879***
Se	0.01954	0.01827	0.0173	0.01776	0.01932	0.01762	0.0175	0.018	0.01608	0.01772	0.01964	0.01709	0.01739	0.01696
<b>Logistics</b>	-0.002	-0.07683***	-0.07586***	-0.05517***	-0.01768	-0.08576***	-0.11007***	-0.03166***	0.00788	0.00225	-0.07922***	-0.03426***	-0.02797**	0.05219***
Se	0.01275	0.01192	0.01129	0.01159	0.01261	0.0115	0.01142	0.01174	0.01049	0.01156	0.01282	0.01115	0.01135	0.01107
<b>Comms</b>	3.42058**	-0.02425*	-0.11392***	-0.11181***	-0.04463***	-0.10807***	-0.10788***	-0.039***	-0.05255***	0.02957**	-0.04681***	-0.0652***	-0.07541***	0.00044421
Se	0.01503	0.01405	0.01331	0.01367	0.01487	0.01356	0.01346	0.01385	0.01237	0.01363	0.01511	0.01315	0.01338	0.01305
<b>Artillery</b>	-0.05369***	-0.04626***	-0.07902***	-0.04102***	-0.07343***	-0.10165***	-0.11104***	-0.06263***	-0.07126***	-0.04041***	-0.13329***	-0.05062***	-0.03318**	0.0007277
Se	0.01539	0.01439	0.01362	0.01399	0.01522	0.01388	0.01378	0.01418	0.01266	0.01396	0.01547	0.01346	0.0137	0.01336
Finance	0.03684	0.02685	0.03384	0.03718	0.07211***	-0.00636	0.05394**	0.16253***	0.14314***	0.12147***	0.0848***	0.05704**	0.1188***	0.27256***
Se	0.02584	0.02416	0.02287	0.02349	0.02556	0.0233	0.02314	0.0238	0.02126	0.02344	0.02597	0.02261	0.023	0.02243
<b>Legal</b>	0.05512**	0.0453*	0.066***	0.03309	-0.00266	-0.03955*	0.00596	0.0604**	0.02484	0.33675***	-0.01477	0.04553**	0.18479***	0.01343
Se	0.02638	0.02466	0.02335	0.02398	0.02609	0.02379	0.02362	0.0243	0.02171	0.02392	0.02651	0.02308	0.02348	0.0229
<b>1<sup>st</sup> LT</b>	0.42735***	0.47439***	0.28395***	0.35801***	0.3503***	0.32212***	0.30045	0.25811***	0.30646***	0.3488***	0.24323***	0.38611***	0.35149***	0.23267***
Se	0.01769	0.01654	0.01566	0.01608	0.0175	0.01595	0.01584	0.0163	0.01456	0.01605	0.01778	0.01548	0.01575	0.01536
<b>CAPT</b>	0.80136***	0.86493***	0.63392***	0.67935***	0.70636***	0.69931***	0.67874	0.61521***	0.63435***	0.73084***	0.70291***	0.73639***	0.71697***	0.53899***
Se	0.01757	0.01643	0.01555	0.01597	0.0175	0.01584	0.01573	0.01618	0.01446	0.01594	0.01766	0.01537	0.01564	0.01525
<b>MAJ</b>	1.16152***	1.23433***	0.95122***	1.02503***	1.05329***	1.02485***	1.00274	0.8889***	0.91971***	1.06143***	1.12385***	1.09392***	1.08467***	0.74979***
Se	0.01866	0.01745	0.01652	0.01696	0.01846	0.01683	0.01671	0.01719	0.01536	0.01693	0.01876	0.01633	0.01661	0.0162
<b>LTCOL</b>	1.49756***	1.56293***	1.26325***	1.31002***	1.36263***	1.36466***	1.32766	1.17236***	1.22596***	1.4034***	1.51488***	1.41613***	1.40965***	1.04865***
Se	0.0212	0.01983	0.01877	0.01928	0.02097	0.01912	0.01899	0.01953	0.01745	0.01923	0.02132	0.01855	0.01888	0.01841
<b>fy2000</b>	0.15203***	0.14188***	0.10547***	0.14063***	0.17742***	0.14107***	0.15676	0.13329***	0.14315***	0.12655***	0.10259***	0.16241***	0.139***	0.06445***
Se	0.0168	0.01571	0.01487	0.01527	0.01662	0.01515	0.01505	0.01548	0.01383	0.01524	0.01689	0.0147	0.01496	0.01458
<b>fy2001</b>	0.29253***	0.27433***	0.20404***	0.26477***	0.28561***	0.25974***	0.28921	0.2267***	0.25683***	0.23063***	0.21585***	0.29225***	0.27617***	0.11116***
Se	0.0167	0.01561	0.01478	0.01518	0.01652	0.01506	0.01496	0.01538	0.01374	0.01515	0.01679	0.01461	0.01487	0.0145
<b>fy2002</b>	0.34235***	0.31009***	0.25765***	0.30363***	0.31751***	0.29062***	0.32534	0.24961***	0.26995***	0.27323***	0.23216***	0.32341***	0.29023***	0.12124***
Se	0.0167	0.01562	0.01479	0.01519	0.01652	0.01506	0.01496	0.01539	0.01375	0.01515	0.01679	0.01462	0.01487	0.0145
<b>fy2003</b>	0.46587***	0.31009***	0.44151***	0.47057***	0.39874***	0.36651***	0.39299	0.31853***	0.36724***	0.35495***	0.2554***	0.42769***	0.37846***	0.1662***
Se	0.01661	0.01553	0.01471	0.0151	0.01643	0.01498	0.01488	0.0153	0.01367	0.01507	0.0167	0.01453	0.01479	0.01442
<b>fy2004</b>	0.50159***	0.45318***	0.3961***	0.44568***	0.44476***	0.40232***	0.44774	0.35473***	0.3733***	0.39345***	0.34464***	0.4477***	0.41463***	0.19987***
Se	0.01926	0.01801	0.01705	0.01751	0.01905	0.01737	0.01725	0.01774	0.01585	0.01747	0.01936	0.01685	0.01714	0.01672
n	33792													
Coeff Var	20.28	20.07	20.606	20.87	20.678	19.742	20.565	19.934	18.332	20.102	25.247	19.416	19.766	19.989
R-sq	0.2119	0.2446	0.2112	0.2088	0.1867	0.2159	0.219	0.1701	0.2105	0.2306	0.2229	0.2391	0.238	0.1413
Adj R-Sq	0.2116	0.2443	0.2108	0.2084	0.1864	0.2156	0.2187	0.1697	0.2102	0.2303	0.2225	0.2388	0.2377	0.141
F Value	<b>648.72</b>	<b>781.22</b>	<b>645.89</b>	<b>814.48</b>	<b>553.85</b>	<b>664.27</b>	<b>676.49</b>	<b>494.36</b>	<b>643.39</b>	<b>723.04</b>	<b>691.85</b>	<b>758.13</b>	<b>753.7</b>	<b>397.17</b>
Pr>F	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>	<b>&lt;0.0001</b>

## 2. Goodness of Fit

Goodness-of-fit is the measure of how well the explanatory or independent variables,  $x$ , explain the dependent variable,  $y$ . The  $R^2$  of the regression, sometimes called the coefficient of determination, is defined as  $R^2 \equiv \frac{SSE}{SST} = 1 - \frac{SSR}{SST}$ .

The  $R^2$  for the FITREP competency models ranged from 0.1413 (*Evaluation*) to 0.2446 (Mission Proficiency). The average  $R^2$  across all models was around 0.21. This means that 21% of the variation in  $Y$  could be explained by the variation in explanatory variables. Adjusted  $R^2$  was no more than 0.0004 difference from  $R^2$  for all models.

Overall significance was given by the F-statistic which ranged from 397.17 (*Evaluation*) to 814.48 (*Individual Effectiveness*). Significance F ( $\text{Pr} > F$ ) for the overall equation significance for all equations was  $<0.0001$ , which means that the regression equations all have statistical significance at any usual level, overall, allowing us to conclude that the model has a good fit.

The inclusion of other variables (for example: length of service, qualifications, posted duty) that could assist in explaining the FITREP scores would have strengthened the models. Nonetheless, it provides us with some insight into the FITREP reporting trends patterns and the models show a strong relationship between MOS and FITREP scores for each competency.

## 3. Possible Implications of Coefficients

Interpretation of the coefficients relies, again, on the subjective analyses of the observer. Because of the difficulty in measuring differences in output and productivity across MOS, the interpretation of the coefficients must be approached from a heuristic perspective – taking into account personal experience and knowledge of USMC MOS roles.

**Support.** The coefficients of the logistics and communications MOSs were all mostly negative. This may have been expected by some officers who consider the support MOSs as subordinate “lines” to the combat arms. These MOSs support the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA) and, consequently, it may be argued that the propensity for stronger leadership and individual courage may be lessened overall. This

argument is increasingly harder to maintain with a majority of operations today being conducted in low-level scenarios, including military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) - where the battle-space is clearly multi-dimensional and all so-called “combatants” are at equal risk. Recent experience in Iraq and in other theatres of United Nations (UN) operations have indicated that support MOSs may sometimes be regarded by the adversary as ‘soft’ targets and possibly more likely to sustain casualties.

**Services.** Both the financial and legal service MOSs had positive coefficients relative to an Infantry 2LT. There may be a couple of explanations for this effect. Firstly, many legal officers are lateral entry and may already have competence and experience in their chosen MOS.

This may result in higher competence scores in the FITREP assessments. Secondly, the goals and job statements for financial officers are very often clearly defined. For example, expense statements, cash flows, and other forms of financial reporting are highly objective and easily measurable. They are also numeric and objective, and the supervision of those “missions” is easier to maintain than the Infantry 2LT whose task may be to clear the enemy from a given grid square.

The variables that contribute to the young Infantry leader’s environment such as uncertainty, violence, simultaneity, and other elements of the “fog of war”, may render the assessment of his *Mission Performance* or *Mission Proficiency* harder to fairly rate.

**Year.** The estimated coefficients for year continue the increasing scores trend identified by Ergun. What is significant is that every FITREP competency experienced statistically significant increases between 0.14 and 0.35 between 2000 and 2004. As a percentage of the total scores available – this represents an increase of between 2 - 5% in four years. The introduction of an *Evaluation* competency in 1999 was aimed at reducing this effect. Withal, it appears the trend is continuing, albeit at a small rate.

#### 4. Omitted Variables

Aside from psycho-social factors as mentioned previously, other examples may include family situation, amount of time on combat/sea duty, amount of time in remote posting locality, morale, quality of life as perceived by the individual, job satisfaction, switching costs to the civilian environment, and similar factors. There may be many omitted variables which may change the coefficient and/or significance of known independent variables used in the model.

#### 5. Omission of Data due to Not Observed Competencies

The removal of all the records with ‘not observed’ entries may create some bias with respect to identifying key competencies for different MOSs. A bias may occur as the remaining reported competency scores are removed with the deletion of the unobserved competency. An attempt to examine the effect of the bias introduced through the omission of these records with incomplete data was made through the use of following method.

A data set was created for each competency, descriptive statistics were analyzed (refer averages on Table 28), and an OLS regression was conducted for each competency subgroup. The model used in this method was same as the original model with it being broken down into the fourteen separate data sets for each competency subgroup:

$\text{FITREP Competency Score} = f(\text{MOS}, \text{rank}, \text{fy})$
Base Case: Infantry, 2nd Lieutenant, 1999.

The purpose of this division of the competency subgroups was to explore the possible bias of the omission of incomplete data. The results of the estimated coefficients are listed at Table 29. The results of this separation of the data into fourteen separate data sets are very similar to the results of the original method of having only one data set.

The results of both methods demonstrated that the coefficients of the ranks were also all increasingly positive, from 1<sup>st</sup> LT to LTCOL. The first method showed differences in the significant coefficients across the competencies and at the level of LTCOL ranged from 1.04 for *Evaluation* to 1.56 for *Mission Proficiency*. Likewise, the

second method showed differences in the significant coefficients across the competencies and at the level of LTCOL ranged from 1.004 for *Evaluation* to 1.62 for *Mission Proficiency*. These coefficients are compared with the base case, an Infantry 2<sup>nd</sup> LT.

Since the results were very similar in both methods and because the second method was unwieldy using fourteen separate data sets, it was decided that a more thorough analysis could be conducted with the first method using one inclusive data set. Furthermore, due to the similar results of the two methods, it appeared that no advantages were gained by this second method.

Table 28. Average FITREP Scores for each Competency by MOS and Rank with the Inclusion of FITREPs with ‘Not Observed’ Competencies

	Mission Performance	Mission Proficiency	Individual Courage	Individual Effectiveness	Individual Initiative	Leading Subordinates	Developing Subordinates	Setting the Example	Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates	Communication	Professional Military Education	Decision Making Ability	Judgment	Evaluation
Average	4.46	4.21	3.88	3.94	4.32	4.13	3.93	4.18	4.06	4.08	3.60	4.07	4.07	3.92
<b>Infantry</b>														
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.07	3.83	3.55	3.61	3.98	3.77	3.59	3.83	3.72	3.68	3.17	3.74	3.72	3.65
LTCOL	5.11	4.88	4.56	4.66	4.96	4.82	4.59	4.76	4.65	4.80	4.51	4.75	4.75	4.44
	1.04	1.05	1.01	1.05	0.98	1.05	1.00	0.93	0.93	1.12	1.34	1.01	1.03	0.79
<b>Logistics</b>														
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.01	3.69	3.47	3.55	3.93	3.69	3.45	3.79	3.73	3.68	3.09	3.65	3.66	3.67
LTCOL	5.03	4.86	4.48	4.54	4.91	4.72	4.53	4.73	4.64	4.71	4.33	4.69	4.70	4.50
<b>Comms</b>														
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.01	3.80	3.47	3.53	3.91	3.70	3.53	3.81	3.68	3.75	3.14	3.65	3.63	3.58
LTCOL	5.09	4.88	4.48	4.55	4.95	4.71	4.50	4.69	4.58	4.79	4.40	4.70	4.71	4.45
	1.08	1.08	1.01	1.02	1.04	1.01	0.97	0.88	0.90	1.04	1.26	1.05	1.08	0.87
<b>Artillery</b>														
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.01	3.81	3.51	3.61	3.89	3.65	3.47	3.75	3.60	3.64	3.01	3.67	3.67	3.63
LTCOL	4.95	4.74	4.43	4.51	4.81	4.58	4.42	4.59	4.46	4.66	4.27	4.58	4.60	4.26
<b>Finance</b>														
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	4.21	3.91	3.67	3.78	4.19	3.87	3.69	4.11	3.91	3.96	3.42	3.86	3.88	3.96
LTCOL	4.98	4.84	4.43	4.48	4.77	4.62	4.49	4.57	4.52	4.62	4.21	4.63	4.68	4.51
<b>Legal</b>														
1 <sup>st</sup> LT	3.97	3.65	3.66	3.61	3.94	3.48	3.40	3.91	3.55	4.03	3.17	3.73	3.81	3.88
LTCOL	5.12	4.96	4.56	4.63	4.89	4.65	4.55	4.78	4.56	5.06	4.49	4.77	4.89	4.41
	1.15	1.31	0.90	1.02	0.95	1.17	1.15	0.87	1.01	1.03	1.32	1.04	1.08	0.53
1 <sup>st</sup> LT														
Max	4.21	3.91	3.67	3.78	4.19	3.87	3.69	4.11	3.91	4.03	3.42	3.86	3.88	3.96
Min	3.97	3.65	3.47	3.53	3.89	3.48	3.40	3.75	3.55	3.64	3.01	3.65	3.63	3.58
LTCOL														
Max	5.12	4.96	4.56	4.66	4.96	4.82	4.59	4.78	4.65	5.06	4.51	4.77	4.89	4.51
Min	4.95	4.74	4.43	4.48	4.77	4.58	4.42	4.57	4.46	4.62	4.21	4.58	4.60	4.26

\* indicates significance at  $\alpha=0.10$   
 \*\* indicates significance at  $\alpha=0.05$   
 \*\*\* indicates significance at  $\alpha=0.01$   
 All significance levels are one tailed.

Table 29. Regression Outputs for Each FITREP Competency as a function of MOS and RANK

	Mission Performance	Mission Proficiency	Individual Courage	Individual Effectiveness	Individual Initiative	Leading Subordinates	Developing Subordinates	Setting the Example	Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates	Communication	Professional Military Education	Decision Making Ability	Judgment	Evaluation
<b>Intercept</b>	3.29622***	3.02969***	2.99289***	2.93732***	3.30744***	3.16482***	3.01771***	3.29317***	3.15652***	3.05458***	2.69014***	3.01138***	3.05614***	3.30428***
Se	0.01422	0.01339	0.01310	0.01341	0.01422	0.01318	0.01332	0.01325	0.01239	0.01298	0.01453	0.01268	0.01276	0.01642
<b>Logistics</b>	-0.00509	-0.07046***	-0.06744***	-0.05762***	-0.02474**	0.07802***	0.10031***	-0.02816***	0.00730	0.00057328	-0.07364***	-0.03528***	-0.02651**	0.04921***
Se	0.01017	0.0095750	0.00940	0.00960	0.01009	0.00928	0.00932	0.00948	0.00867	0.00929	0.01043	0.00899	0.00904	0.01051
<b>Comms</b>	-0.05271***	-0.04140***	-0.12215***	-0.11625***	-0.06433***	0.10205***	0.10018***	-0.06348***	-0.05595***	0.01232	-0.05936***	-0.07349***	-0.07797***	0.01174
Se	0.01174	0.01105	0.01090	0.01117	0.01166	0.01086	0.01094	0.01095	0.01017	0.01073	0.01204	0.01039	0.01045	0.01238
<b>Artillery</b>	-0.10637***	-0.09400***	-0.09283***	-0.10056***	-0.11695***	0.15887***	0.15405***	-0.15273***	-0.13706***	0.09201***	-0.17085***	-0.09567***	-0.07874***	-0.03972***
Se	0.01134	0.01068	0.01065	0.01075	0.01136	0.01047	0.01053	0.01057	0.00980	0.01036	0.01159	0.01013	0.01019	0.01263
Finance	0.06276***	0.02491	0.04583***	0.06160***	0.08397***	-0.00769	0.02678	0.13543***	0.10376***	0.16566***	0.12352***	0.06214***	0.10355***	0.25042***
Se	0.01850	0.01742	0.01719	0.01771	0.01834	0.01702	0.01710	0.01724	0.01590	0.01689	0.01889	0.01633	0.01644	0.02085
<b>Legal</b>	0.01562	0.00205	0.05792***	0.02317	-0.02664*	0.15313***	0.06799***	0.03186**	-0.05834***	0.229995***	-0.04809***	0.02928**	0.14179***	0.03456
Se	0.01489	0.01401	0.01376	0.01415	0.01477	0.01417	0.01437	0.01391	0.01328	0.01363	0.01543	0.01317	0.01325	0.02174
<b>1<sup>st</sup> LT</b>	0.50709***	0.56189***	0.34972***	0.43747***	0.42105***	0.39596***	0.34183***	0.35998***	0.36496***	0.43342***	0.31422***	0.46403***	0.43012***	0.23496***
Se	0.01313	0.01236	0.01211	0.01233	0.01314	0.01213	0.01219	0.01221	0.01133	0.01198	0.01340	0.01171	0.01178	0.01489
<b>CAPT</b>	0.88360***	0.96587***	0.70799***	0.77861***	0.78397***	0.77681***	0.73024***	0.71853***	0.69272***	0.82528***	0.77807***	0.82248***	0.79455***	0.54113***
Se	0.01288	0.01213	0.01197	0.01216	0.01290	0.01197	0.01205	0.01199	0.01120	0.01175	0.01317	0.01150	0.01157	0.01470
<b>MAJ</b>	1.26198***	1.36215***	1.07150***	1.17400***	1.14122***	1.11860***	1.07266***	1.01825***	1.00204***	1.21242***	1.25377***	1.20164***	1.18362***	0.72457***
Se	0.01338	0.01260	0.01255	0.01270	0.01341	0.01250	0.01262	0.01248	0.01172	0.01223	0.01373	0.01196	0.01203	0.01546
<b>LTCOL</b>	1.50876***	1.61761***	1.31291***	1.41553***	1.36556***	1.39552***	1.32860***	1.23781***	1.24938***	1.47348***	1.582522***	1.45048***	1.43843***	1.00450***
Se	0.01487	0.01401	0.01400	0.01426	0.01409	0.01387	0.01401	0.01387	0.01303	0.01360	0.01538	0.01327	0.01336	0.01735
<b>fy2000</b>	0.150554***	0.13813***	0.11399***	0.14963***	0.18264***	0.14236***	0.14786***	0.12981***	0.12737***	0.14058***	0.11538***	0.16458***	0.13712***	0.04723***
Se	0.01258	0.01185	0.01156	0.01193	0.01253	0.01163	0.01172	0.01174	0.01090	0.01150	0.01289	0.01118	0.01124	0.01399
<b>fy2001</b>	0.27406***	0.25170***	0.22022***	0.27322***	0.28797***	0.24448***	0.25973***	0.22395***	0.22683***	0.23051***	0.21641***	0.28073***	0.25587***	0.09748***
Se	0.01253	0.01180	0.01158	0.01190	0.01248	0.01156	0.01165	0.01170	0.01083	0.01146	0.01283	0.01112	0.01119	0.01383
<b>fy2002</b>	0.34756***	0.30539***	0.28587***	0.33368***	0.33596***	0.29372***	0.30723***	0.27570***	0.26998***	0.28592***	0.25320***	0.33517***	0.29813***	0.110382**
Se	0.01256	0.01182	0.01160	0.01192	0.01249	0.01157	0.01166	0.01172	0.01084	0.01148	0.01286	0.01113	0.01120	0.01387
<b>fy2003</b>	0.41545***	0.36670***	0.41770***	0.44313***	0.37665***	0.33591***	0.35365***	0.30419***	0.33401***	0.33617***	0.23575***	0.39511***	0.35194***	0.15214***
Se	0.01242	0.01169	0.01144	0.01173	0.01236	0.01147	0.01155	0.01160	0.01074	0.01135	0.01276	0.01101	0.01108	0.01377
<b>fy2004</b>	0.49104***	0.43212***	0.39921***	0.43989***	0.44545***	0.38362***	0.41149***	0.35259***	0.34465***	0.39104***	0.32419***	0.43754***	0.40076	0.19221***
Se	0.01461	0.01375	0.01349	0.01379	0.01452	0.01345	0.01353	0.01363	0.01258	0.01334	0.01495	0.01294	0.01302	0.01596
n	62319	62276	55307	56473	61749	58463	57128	61940	57482	62035	60268	61542	61532	38529
Coeff Var	21.26912	21.15277	21.12228	21.46796	21.53144	20.51513	21.33486	20.95519	19.30504	20.8135234	26.17823	20.33033	20.39922	20.29892
R-sq	0.2204	0.26	0.2307	0.2393	0.1928	0.2256	0.2215	0.1851	0.2132	0.2544	0.2389	0.2498	0.2487	0.1287
Adj R-Sq	0.2202	0.2599	0.2305	0.2391	0.1926	0.2254	0.2213	0.185	0.213	0.2543	0.2387	0.2496	0.2486	0.1284
F Value	1257.8	1562.84	1184.42	1268.32	1053.17	1216.31	1160.71	1004.95	112.07	1511.73	1198.99197	1463.23	1454.83	406.31
Pr>F	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001	<0.0001

## **6. Selection Bias**

If the sample is chosen on the basis of the y variable, then it is possible that we may have selection bias. The data used in this report is a pre-selected, non-random sample that has been specifically chosen to analyze FITREP scoring effects in the USMC. If the data was selected simply to measure the scoring ability of USMC officers as the dependent value then we can expect some element of selection bias because  $E(\text{score} | \text{education, age, experience})$  is not the same as  $E(\text{score} | < \text{contracted 6 year specialists})$ . The decision to work hard or report highly may be based on unobserved factors that affect the FITREP competency score. Similarly, is the potential for selection bias in this study.

**Drop-out bias.** This report has not addressed the attrition rate of low-scoring officers. The literature review has identified that lower quality officers do not tend to stay in service as long. There is therefore a selection bias in looking only at those officers who have remained in the system through to the rank of LTCOL as it is likely that if a USMC officer has experienced low FITREP scores – then they will attrite from the service and not be eligible for promotion. The corollary of this effect as identified by Wielsma is that the variance of the average officers' FITREP scores decreases (and the average score increases) as they progress through the ranks, therefore, there must be some analysis of the nature of the position to which the officer is promoted. Historically, combat positions in senior ranks are the most competitive. Additionally, the pooled data is not wide enough to capture the promotion effects at senior ranks – where competitiveness and politics play a stronger influence.

## **7. Comparison of Results With Other Research**

There has been no previous research on the reporting scores of FITREP competencies to compare with the results of this analysis. However, the results of this study are similar with the previously observed 'reporting creep' by Ergun (Ergun, 2003). These results showed statistically significant increases between 0.14 and 0.35 between 2000 and 2004.



## **O. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Summary of Results**

The results of the preliminary bivariate analysis show significant differences in the average FITNESS score for each competency across MOS and ranks. The results of the multiple regression analysis support the hypothesis that the estimated coefficients for MOS groups are significant in explaining competency scores when controlling for rank and report year. These results show that even though the USMC views every Marine as a rifleman, if the importance of a particular competency can be measured by its statistically significant difference in average FITREP score - against other MOSs, then specific MOSs require different skill sets in order to be successful. If the appraisal of USMC officers is to accurately reflect those competencies that are required for success in a particular MOS – then that should be reflected in the weighting of the competency.

Earlier in the chapter, the *"Leadership Pipeline"* was discussed at length. This discussion was focused on the belief that the skill set of a leader needs to change as he or she gains more leadership responsibility. The differences in the FITREP competency scores across ranks again, lends support to the belief that the skill sets of a leader change as the leader gains more responsibility.

### **2. Discussion**

The differences in the average FITREP score for each competency across MOS and ranks should be important to policy makers. These differences show that evaluations may need to be tailored for each MOS. Furthermore, these differences show that MOSs require different skill sets in order to be successful. Since every individual and MOS is different, consideration should be given to improving the job selection process in assigning MOSs. If the USMC is able to improve the "job fit" of the MOSs and individuals, then the USMC should see an associated increase in performance – which may be measured by retention and/or productivity.

The FITREPs analyzed may provide some evidence about reporting scores for promotion to LTCOL; however, the data only includes the years 1999 to 2004, and does not include information on senior ranks. To truly test whether the determinants of quality

differ across the USMC by measuring FITNESS scores, a corps wide representative time-series sample of USMC officers and their MOS and rank is needed.

The literature review does not consistently and clearly indicate how the determinants of performance status systematically differ for MOS and rank. However, if it were possible to collect panel data (this analysis was based on pooled data) over the following twenty years when selection for staff officer positions becomes more competitive - we may see more differences develop across MOS and ranks.

**Selection.** Men and women who become USMC officers do so because they meet certain criteria, have certain attributes, and have been recommended by a specific selection process that is mostly unchanged in the past fifty years. Expanding an assignment program could mean further changing the criteria which would also change the basic characteristics of USMC officers. It follows that this would change the OLS estimations determined in this report, although sample selection corrections could be applied.

### **3. Recommendations and Future Study**

The FITREPs analyzed may provide some evidence about reporting scores for promotion through LTCOL; however, the data only includes 1999 to 2004, and does not include information on senior ranks. To truly test whether the determinants of quality differ across the USMC by measuring FITREP scores, a corps-wide representative time-series sample of USMC officers and their MOS and rank is preferred. The literature review does not consistently and clearly indicate how the determinants of performance status systematically differ for MOS and rank. However, if it was possible to collect panel data (this analysis was based on pooled data) over the following twenty years when selection for staff officer positions becomes more competitive - we may see more differences develop across MOS and ranks.

A central assumption of any research on assignment processes is that the process by which officers are selected for assignment and promotion is personality blind, so that if USMC officers have the same amount of education, qualifications, job experience, and reported equally across all FITREP competencies, then they would be treated equally with respect to any given position.

However, to understand the systematic differences in assignment outcomes in the workplace, it is necessary to re-examine this assumption. Other influences such as the 'old boy network', nepotism, and corps groupthink may influence selection. In the following chapter, a survey is conducted with USMC officers providing them an opportunity to weight the FITREP competencies according to their priorities for the officer's primary MOS. Additionally, the officers will be given a chance to state how objective they think the promotion and assignment process is in implementation.

The strength of this study is that it confirms previous analysis conducted on the effects of time on average FITREP scores through OLS regression. It also proves, statistically, that there are salient differences across MOS and rank for most FITREP competency scores. Accepting the restriction of time, this study provides a framework for further analysis on the effects of MOS and rank on FITREP scores in the USMC. If it becomes possible to combine the new data with updated demographic and officer characteristics information, the significance of the FITREP score with promotion rates using the Cox Regression may be useful.

The reliability of the results, quantitatively, are acceptable. However, as identified at different sections in the paper – there are a range of other considerations to be analyzed before we can confidently understand the effects of MOS and rank on FITREP scores – which, ultimately contribute to promotion prospects. Psycho-social effects have not been measured in this analysis. Therefore, combining qualitative research may also provide a more meaningful analysis of the effects of MOS and rank on FITREP competency scores.

It is also hard to define these effects on promotion over a relatively short time period. As officers in the pooled data set progress towards the staff ranks where promotion becomes more competitive - then we may expect more significant results. However, we also know that the variance of the averages tightens as lesser-performing officers attrite from the organization. Withal, analyses of performance will continue to search for, at the least, an accountable, visible, and effective promotion and assignment process.

#### 4. Future Studies

It is tempting to propose changing the mix of FITREP competencies; however, much more research is required. This brief analysis provides a baseline from which to further develop studies on the USMC promotion/assignment process with particular attention given to the USMC internal promotion system. It may be possible to conduct a hazard study of FITREP scores with promotion rates thereby providing some efficacy about the predictor capability of FITREP scores with performance. This will require further liaison with the USMC for data.

As discussed previously, when choosing promotion/assignment methods it is equally important to provide valid predictors. Chmiel provides the following types of validity and reliability (2000, 81). The USMC promotion/assignment process - through use of the FITREP - has been substituted for traditional 'selection' methods.

1. *Predictive validity*: the extent to which [FITREP] scores predict future job performance. Successful applicants are tracked through the selection process and after a period of employment with the organization, a subsequent measure of performance is obtained. The [appraisal] and criterion ratings are correlated.
2. *Concurrent validity*: the extent to which [FITREP] scores predict current performance. [Appraisal] techniques are administered to existing job incumbents and correlated with ratings of job performance taken over the same time period.
3. *Construct validity*: the extent to which [FITREPs] accurately measures the constructs or dimensions it was designed to assess. The [appraisal] method is correlated with another method which is known to accurately reflect the construct.
4. *Content validity*: the extent to which the [promotion/assignment] process adequately samples all the important dimensions of the job. This requires a thorough examination of the job description and job specification.
5. *Face validity*: the extent to which the applicant perceives the [promotion/assignment] method to be relevant to the job.
6. *Parallel reliability*: the measurement consistency. Each candidate completes two equivalent [promotion/assignment] methods and the two scores are correlated.
7. *Test-retest reliability*: The measurement consistency. Candidates complete the same [promotion/assignment] method at two time points. The two scores are then correlated.

8. *Split-half reliability*: the measurement consistency. Items from a measure are divided into two halves (e.g. odd-numbered versus even-numbered items) and the scores from each half are correlated.

Chmiel continues to provide a comparison of predictive validity and popularity ratings for selection methods. A number of these types can be further analyzed to assist with determining the combination of FITREP competencies that provide the greatest validity as predictors of better performance amongst USMC officers.

## **5. Application**

This study has demonstrated that there are statistically significant differences in the FITREP scores across MOS - and up the USMC chain of command. This provides an opportunity for further analyses to determine suitable criteria for appraisal of USMC officers and the appropriate weighting that should be given to those criteria. The correlation of competencies can also be studied to provide better validity.

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## IV. USMC SURVEY

### A. BACKGROUND

Chmiel defines performance appraisals as follows: “Essentially, a performance appraisal is a generic term used to describe a range of processes whereby a manager and a subordinate meet on a periodic basis (usually annually) to review the work of the latter and to seek to raise performance levels” (2000, 126). Chmiel continues to state that the key issue in a performance appraisal is to “establish the aim of the exercise” (2000, 127). As noted earlier, according to the MARCORPROMMAN the purpose of the USMC FITREP is to provide historical data on an officer’s performance to assess his or her potential for promotion. Chmiel offers the following purposes for the performance appraisal (2000, 128):

**Improving Performance.** Providing feedback to employees provides them with an opportunity to work on the identified weaknesses. This is one of the goals of 360<sup>0</sup> reporting where subordinates get an opportunity to rate the leadership of their seniors. It also allows the leader an opportunity to get some feedback on how successful they in leading their subordinates.

**Making Reward Decisions.** These reward decisions may be based upon a range of different rewards systems; nonetheless, they may be objective or piece-rate based, promotion, assignment, or benefit based - or a combination of different reward systems.

**Motivating Staff.** Chmiel offers three appraisal schemes:

- Giving feedback motivates people, described by Chmiel as “an article of faith” (2000, 128).
- “Assessment also increases motivation through its role in facilitating the fair distribution of rewards” (op cit).
- Setting targets “that improve on previous performance” (op cit) for employees - motivates them to perform.

**Developing Subordinates.** Performance appraisals are meant to assist subordinates in developing their workplace skills. This element of the FITREP may be underplayed.

Informal evidence from discussion with NPS students suggests that in today's military, all ranks are often so busy that very little of the planned developmental activity for an officer is derived from the FITREP. Most often, the only development provided for an officer will be that identified by exception from the OPMF. These reports work by exception, rather than intervention. Milestones are established for an officer throughout his/her career that flag an officer for attendance/participation in a promotion course.

Bach and Sisson believe that the more competitive nature of business has “placed a premium on firm’s ability to measure and improve the performance of their staff” (1999, 242). Using Porter’s five forces model for identifying market forces we can perhaps derive a military equivalent of the competitive nature of business. The corporate model is described below:

Figure 19. Porter's Five Forces Influencing Industry and Competitive Change



training to win between them. Figure 20 is offered as a military alternative to Porter's five-forces model for organizations.

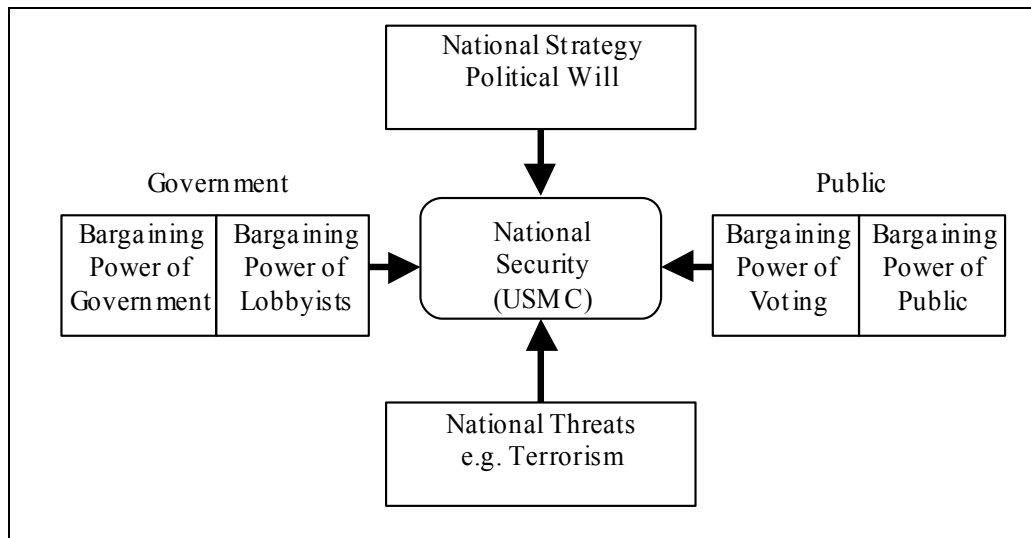


Figure 20. Porter's Five Forces Influencing Government and Military Advantage

The complexity of the changing nature of these so-called market threats to the USMC infers that a possible review of the promotion system is required. In contrast, stakeholder analysis, an important part of strategy development for corporate America, is about coming to common ground that benefits all stakeholders. A stakeholder analysis for the USMC will not be undertaken for the USMC, suffice to say that there would be little doubt left as to the changing nature of these relationships within the world environment in the last twenty years. National Military Strategy must be defined without merely looking at what comes out of the end of guns. Therefore, it is believed that identifying potential leaders must be undertaken with deference to these new relationships that are both internal and external to the USMC system. An alternative constructivist approach to the current prescriptive USMC promotion system may be a worthy option.

## **B. INTRODUCTION**

There are many personality traits and skills that all Marine Corps officers have in common. These personality traits include being challenge-seeking individuals with “take-charge” attitudes. These common personality traits are not by coincidence, but rather by design through advertising and recruiting campaigns. The Marine Corps intentionally targets and recruits individuals with these personality traits. The Marines have been very successful in attracting the challenge seekers through slogans such as "Maybe you can be one of us ... the Few, the Proud, the Marines" and "We didn't promise you a rose garden." After self selection, these individuals are screened and trained further to ensure that new officers "possess the traits and determination that the Marine Corps covets" ([www.leaderlinks.com](http://www.leaderlinks.com)).

Even though there is a certain amount of homogeneity among these traits, certain jobs require different combinations of competencies in order to be successful. For example, it is expected that the skill set of a successful lawyer differs from that of a successful infantry officer. In order to help examine how competencies differ among officers from various Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs), a survey was conducted among Marine Corps officers.

The survey followed the guidance from Edwards, Thomas, Rosenfeld, and Booth-Kewley (1997) in *How to Conduct Organizational Surveys*. The survey used a combination of both closed-ended and open-ended questions in order to maximize the utility of the respondents' answers and to minimize the time required to complete the survey in order to maximize the response rate.

In addition, the survey respondents were not randomly selected Marine Corps officers. The survey sample only included officers that were either Marine students or staff at the Naval Postgraduate School. The limitations of this selected sample will be discussed later.

## **C. METHODOLOGY FOR SURVEY**

The most important part of any survey is developing the questions and therefore great care should be placed in writing the survey items (Edwards, et al., 1997). As discussed in the introduction, this survey used a combination of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The primary advantages of closed-ended questions are that they may be answered quickly and have standardized results which may be easily interpreted. In addition, closed-ended questions provide the same frame of reference to each of the respondents (Edwards, et al., 1997).

Even though there are several benefits to closed-ended questions, they do have their drawbacks. The primary weakness of closed-ended questions is that it forces the respondents to fit their responses into the limited answers provided. As Edwards states, "closed-ended questions may compel people to express an attitude when they have no opinion on the matter or, even worse, when they do not understand the question" (Edwards, et al., 1997). Edwards goes further by explaining, "if all the questions on the survey are closed-ended, some respondents may be frustrated by not being allowed to express their views in their own words" (Edwards, et al., 1997).

In order to provide a balance between the tradeoffs of closed-ended and open-ended questions, a combination of both types of questions were used. This survey attempted to minimize any misinterpretation of the closed-ended survey questions by using the same wording as the evaluations found on the Marine Corps fitness reports. All Marine Corps officers should be intimately familiar with this wording. In addition, a broad Likert scale comprised of six choices was offered. A broad Likert scale comprised of several choices should hopefully be adequate to meet satisfaction of the respondents' view points. For the majority of the closed-ended questions the following Likert scale was used:

1. unnecessary for success
2. sometimes relevant for success
3. relevant for success
4. important for success
5. highly important for success

6. critical for success.

An alternative Likert scale was used for the final closed-ended question which rated the overall fitness report system. This Likert scale for this question was as follows:

1. poor
2. below average
3. average
4. good
5. excellent
6. outstanding.

An even number of choices for the Likert scale was chosen in order to force the "fence sitters" to decide one way or the other. One disadvantage of forcing the respondents to decide one way or the other is that there may be actual respondents who are indifferent. In order to help minimize the fallout from this disadvantage, more "positive" choices were offered than "negative" choices. This skewing of the Likert scale should help accommodate the majority of the "fence sitters".

Furthermore, in an attempt to further minimize the disadvantage of the possibility of closed-ended questions being misinterpreted, the questions were very specific in nature. These closed-ended questions should provide useful quantitative data that will be analyzed for any trends among different MOSs or pay grades.

Unlike the closed-ended questions that provide quantitative data, the open-ended questions should provide useful qualitative data. In addition to providing qualitative data, the respondents will be able to take advantage of the freedom to express their unconstrained view points with the open-ended format. More importantly, the open-ended questions should provide useful insight and examples of the respondents' experiences that otherwise would not be captured by the survey.

In addition to the closed-ended and open-ended questions, demographical questions were asked. Due to the small survey pool where all the respondents came from the Naval Postgraduate School, only a limited number of demographical questions were asked in order to ensure confidentiality of the respondents. These demographical

questions were primarily in reference to the respondent's grade and MOS. A sample survey questionnaire is provided in Appendix E.

#### **D. DATA**

The survey was conducted during October and November 2004. The survey was sent via e-mail to all 190 Marine officers at the Naval Postgraduate School. The primary pay grades of this Marine population were comprised of captains and majors and there are only a handful of lieutenants and lieutenant colonels. The survey had 103 responses, which corresponds to a response rate of 54.2 percent. This response rate is better than expected since the average response rate is 41.2 percent for e-mail surveys with a population less than 1000 ([www.supersurvey.com](http://www.supersurvey.com)).

A point of major concern for this survey is the limited variability in the respondents in the sample. All of the officers surveyed have chosen to attend the Naval Postgraduate School. This self selection will likely lead to an overstated sample of respondents who have either a greater aptitude toward higher education and/or a greater distaste for life in deployable units. In addition, these officers might have received less than favorable assignments from their monitors and therefore decided to circumvent the standard assignment process by attending the Naval Postgraduate School. This possible self selection will lead to bias if the perceptions of the respondents in the sample differ from the average Marine Corps officer.




Another concern of this survey is the limited range of pay grades. As shown in Table 30, there were no respondents above the grade of lieutenant colonel. In addition, only a handful of lieutenants were sampled. Since the majority of respondents were captains and majors, these two grades will be over sampled and may bias the results.

A third concern of this survey was the potential of non-response bias. For this study it was assumed that the potential of non-response bias was minimal due to the high response rate and due the homogeneity of the population of the sample. The homogeneity of the respondents was a problem within itself, but due to the lack of variability of the sample it was assumed that no one particular group was excluded or under sampled due to the non-responses. In addition, no indicative trends were noted

between the demographics of the respondents of the survey and from the overall population of Marine Corps officers from the Naval Postgraduate School.

## E. RESULTS OF THE RESPONSES

Table 30. Rank of Respondents

1. What is your rank?		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
2nd Lieutenant		0	0%
Lieutenant		5	5%
Captain		65	63%
Major		30	29%
Lieutenant Colonel		3	3%
Colonel		0	0%
Brigadier General		0	0%
Major General		0	0%
Lieutenant General		0	0%
General		0	0%
Total		103	100%

The survey had 103 respondents covering 14 MOSs. As shown in Table 32, pilots and communication officers were over-represented in the survey, and military police, public affairs, air controllers, and engineers were underrepresented. In addition, there were no responses from the armor MOS. Consideration was given to the possibility of combining similar MOSs into subgroups in order to increase representation of the categories. Since the purpose of this survey was to explore which competencies are important in fulfilling duties in primary MOSs it was decided that more utility would be gained by leaving the data within each MOS.

Due to the population of this survey comprising primarily of captains and majors, any comparisons of this survey with the quantitative regression study of the FITREPs found earlier in this paper, will attempt to focus on these two grades. In addition, due to the limited number of responses from each MOS, comparisons made between this survey and the quantitative regression study will be focused on the aggregate level of the averages of the entire population.

Table 31. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Primary Military Occupational Specialty (PMOS)

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
2nd Lieutenant															
Lieutenant						1	1		1	1			1		
Captain	5	3	3		2	6	13	3	6	6	3	6	7	1	1
Major			3		15	1	1		1	2	3	1	2		
Lieutenant Colonel					3										
Colonel															

Table 32. Primary Military Occupational Specialty of Respondents











2. What is your Primary Marine Occupational Specialty (PMOS)?	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Adjutant 	5	5%
Air Control	3	3%
Artillery 	6	6%
Armor	0	0%
Aviation Pilot 	20	20%
Aviation Other 	8	8%
Communications 	15	15%
Engineer	3	3%
Financial 	8	8%
Ground Supply 	9	9%
Infantry 	6	6%
Intelligence 	7	7%
Logistics 	10	10%
Military Police	1	1%
Public Affairs	1	1%
Other	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 33. Average Scores by MOS

	PERFORMANCE	PROFICIENCY	COURAGE	EFFECTIVENESS UNDER STRESS	INITIATIVE	LEADING SUBORDINATES	DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES	SETTING THE EXAMPLE	ENSURING THE WELL- BEING OF SUBORDINATES	COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS	PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME)	DECISION MAKING ABILITY	JUDGMENT	EVALUATIONS
Adjutant	5.2	4.8	3.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	3.6	3.6	4.2	5.4	2.8	3.8	3.6	2.6
Air Control	5.0	5.3	5.0	4.7	4.0	4.0	4.3	5.3	4.3	5.0	4.0	4.7	5.0	2.3
Artillery	5.2	5.0	3.3	5.0	4.2	4.7	4.3	4.2	4.3	5.0	2.8	5.0	4.7	3.3
Aviation Other	5.3	4.8	3.1	4.5	4.5	4.4	3.9	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.3	4.3	4.4	3.1
Aviation Pilot	5.2	4.9	4.1	4.3	4.4	4.6	3.9	4.4	4.0	4.3	3.4	4.8	4.6	3.1
Communications	5.6	5.3	4.3	5.2	5.2	5.2	4.7	4.9	4.8	4.9	3.7	5.1	5.1	3.3
Engineer	5.3	4.7	5.0	5.7	4.7	4.7	5.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	3.7	5.3	5.0	3.7
Financial	4.8	4.6	3.5	4.0	5.0	4.8	4.6	4.9	4.3	5.4	4.0	5.3	4.8	4.3
Ground Supply	5.3	5.0	4.0	4.4	4.9	5.3	4.8	4.9	4.7	4.4	3.0	4.7	4.7	2.8
Infantry	5.8	5.8	4.8	5.2	5.0	5.5	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.5	3.7	5.2	5.0	3.0
Intelligence	5.6	5.4	4.3	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.1	4.6	5.3	5.4	4.0	5.1	4.9	3.3
Logistics	5.3	5.2	4.1	4.9	5.4	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.5	5.1	3.1	5.1	5.2	3.1
Military Police	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	6.0	3.0
Public Affairs	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	5.0	6.0	6.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	2.0
<b>Total Average</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>



Table 34. Importance Rating of Performance




PERFORMANCE. Results achieved during the reporting period. How well those duties are inherent to a Marine's billet, plus all additional duties, formally and informally assigned, were carried out. Reflects a Marine's aptitude, competence, and commitment to the unit's success above personal reward. Indicators are time and resource management, task prioritization, and tenacity to achieve positive ends consistently.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		1	1%
Relevant for success		3	3%
Important for success		16	16%
Highly important for success		26	26%
Critical for success		56	56%
<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 36 shows that performance is the highest ranked competency out of all the competencies. It is no surprise that performance ranks high since this competency incorporates almost all of the other competencies as described previously in the discussion about competency correlation. In addition, performance is usually the main indicator of success and the respondents were asked to weight the FITREP competencies based upon their impact on success in their MOS.

Table 35. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Performance Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success													1		
Relevant for success					1				1	1					
Important for success	1	1	1		3	2	1	1	3	1			1		1
Highly important for success	2	1	3		7	2	4		1	1	1	3	1		
Critical for success	2	1	2		8	4	10	2	3	6	5	4	7	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 36. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Performance Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success			1			
Relevant for success			3			
Important for success		1	12	3		
Highly important for success		1	17	7	1	
Critical for success		3	32	19	2	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 36 demonstrates that there is a trend of increasing performance rating with an increase of rank. This trend of performance rating with an increase of rank is consistent with the quantitative regression study of the FITREPs. Approximately two-thirds of the field grade (majors and lieutenant colonels) ranked performance "critical for success" whereas only half of the company grade officers (lieutenants and captains) ranked performance "critical for success."

Table 37 shows the ranking of the proficiency competency. Proficiency was ranked as the second highest competency. Most MOSs ranked proficiency slightly lower than performance with the exception of infantry and military police. These two MOSs ranked proficiency and performance the same. Unlike the performance competency, respondents ranked proficiency similarly across the different pay grades.

This survey, as well as the quantitative regression study of the FITREPs, demonstrated that two most important and the highest marked competencies were performance and proficiency. The importance of these two competencies could be explained by the level of inter-correlation of these two competencies with the other competencies. For example, it is expected that an individual who has demonstrated high

mission performance will also be successful in other attributes such as decision making and individual initiative.

Table 37. Importance Rating of Proficiency





PROFICIENCY. Demonstrates technical knowledge and practical skill in the execution of the Marine's overall duties. Combines training, education and experience. Translates skills into actions which contribute to accomplishing tasks and missions. Imparts knowledge to others. 4. Grade dependent.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		0	0%
Relevant for success		6	6%
Important for success		18	18%
Highly important for success		40	39%
Critical for success		38	37%
<b>Total</b>		102	100%

Table 38. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Proficiency Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success															
Relevant for success	1				2				1	1			1		
Important for success	1	1	2		2	3	2	2	2	1			1		1
Highly important for success	1		2		10	4	7		4	4	1	4	3		
Critical for success	2	2	2		5	1	6	1	1	3	5	3	5	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 39. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Proficiency Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success						
Relevant for success			5	1		
Important for success		2	13	2	1	
Highly important for success		2	22	15	1	
Critical for success		1	25	11	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 40. Importance Rating of Courage





5.	<b>COURAGE.</b> Moral or physical strength to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Personal acceptance of responsibility and accountability, placing conscience over competing interests regardless of consequences. Conscious, overriding decision to risk bodily harm or death to accomplish the mission or save others. The will to persevere despite uncertainty.			
	Unnecessary for success		2	2%
	Sometimes relevant for success		10	10%
	Relevant for success		19	19%
	Important for success		34	34%
	Highly important for success		23	23%
	Critical for success		13	13%
	<b>Total</b>		101	100%

Table 40 shows the ranking of the courage competency. There is more of a normal distribution from the respondents in the rating of courage. This is possibly due to courage not being a competency that is easily demonstrated or required in normal peace-time duties. An exception came from the sole respondent representing the military police MOS. Table 42 shows similar ranking across different pay grades.

Table 41. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Courage Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success			1										1		
Sometimes relevant for success	2				2	2	1		1	1		1			
Relevant for success	1		1		3	4	1		3	2	1	1	2		
Important for success	1	1	4		8	1	7		3	3	1	2	2		1
Highly important for success	1	1			4	1	4	3	1	1	2	1	4		
Critical for success		1			2		2			1	2	2	1	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	8	6	7	10	1	1

Table 42. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Courage Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success				2		
Sometimes relevant for success			8	1	1	
Relevant for success		1	14	4		
Important for success		2	18	13	1	
Highly important for success		2	16	5		
Critical for success			8	4	1	
Totals		5	64	29	3	

Table 43. Importance Rating of Effectiveness Under Stress

EFFECTIVENESS UNDER STRESS. Thinking, functioning, and leading effectively under conditions of physical and/or mental pressure. Maintaining composure appropriate for the situation, while displaying steady purpose of action, enabling one to inspire others while continuing to lead under adverse conditions. Physical and emotional strength, resilience, and endurance are elements.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
6.			
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		3	3%
Relevant for success		9	9%
Important for success		26	25%
Highly important for success		39	38%
Critical for success		25	25%
Total		102	100%

Effectiveness under stress competency was ranked average in importance among the competencies. Table 44 and Table 45 show an interesting trend with the communication and engineer officers. These two MOSs ranked the effectiveness under stress competency much higher than other MOSs; and ranked this competency much higher than the other competencies. This may be due to the stress added by commanding officers when their communication goes down, or when the commanding officers need to clear an obstacle. This adds validity to the saying, "nobody likes a communication officer around until they need them."

Table 44. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Effectiveness Under Stress Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success					1	1			1						
Relevant for success	1	1			4				1	1			1		
Important for success	2		2		4	3	2		3	5	1	2	2		
Highly important for success	2	1	2		8	2	8	1	3	1	3	3	4		1
Critical for success		1	2		2	2	5	2		2	2	2	3	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 45. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Effectiveness Under Stress Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success			2		1	
Relevant for success			5	4		
Important for success		2	13	10	1	
Highly important for success		1	27	10	1	
Critical for success		2	18	5		
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 46. Importance Rating of Initiative

7. INITIATIVE. Action in the absence of specific direction. Seeing what needs to be done and acting without prompting. The instinct to begin a task and follow through energetically on one's own accord. Being creative, proactive and decisive. Transforming opportunity into action.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		3	3%
Relevant for success		4	4%
Important for success		29	28%
Highly important for success		42	41%
Critical for success		24	24%
<b>Total</b>		102	100%

There are two points to note in the rating of the initiative competency. The first point to note is that the logistic officers rank initiative much higher than other competencies, and higher relative to other MOSs. Due to the extremely limited budgets of the Marine Corps, logistic officers must be very creative in finding resources to move

their equipment. In addition, logistics officers are often forced to follow up on every detail of the logistical plan.

The second point to note is that a lieutenant colonel rated the initiative competency as being only "sometimes relevant for success." At first glance, this seems highly unusual, but this lieutenant colonel is a pilot and in his pursuit of his primary MOS of flying an aircraft, initiative may not be as relevant. The initiative that a pilot might undertake could be stifled by standardization of rules and regulations.

Table 47. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Initiative Rating





	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success					2	1									
Relevant for success		1	1		1	1									
Important for success	4	1	3		7	1	2	1	3	3	2	2			
Highly important for success	1	1	2		6	3	8	2	2	4	2	4	6	1	
Critical for success					3	2	5		3	2	2	1	4		1
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1



Table 48. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Initiative Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success			2		1	
Relevant for success			3	1		
Important for success		1	18	10		
Highly important for success		3	28	10	1	
Critical for success		1	14	8	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 49. Importance Rating of Leading Subordinates

<b>8. LEADING SUBORDINATES.</b> The inseparable relationship between leader and led. The application of leadership principles to provide direction and motivate subordinates. Using authority, persuasion, and personality to influence subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Sustaining motivation and morale while maximizing subordinates' performance.			
		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Unnecessary for success		1	1%
Sometimes relevant for success		3	3%
Relevant for success		8	8%
Important for success		21	21%
Highly important for success		35	35%
Critical for success		33	33%
<b>Total</b>		101	100%

Leading Subordinates ranked about average in level of importance among the competencies. No particular MOS stood out from the reporting average. Withal, there was one outlier of one pilot who was a major who said that Leading Subordinates was unnecessary for success. Overall, there is an increasing trend of importance of the

ranking of Leading Subordinates with the increase in pay grade. The lieutenant colonels rank Leading Subordinates much higher than the other pay grades.





Table 50. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Leading Subordinates Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success					1										
Sometimes relevant for success					1	1				1					
Relevant for success	2		1		1	2						1	1		
Important for success	1	3	1		4		4	1	3		1	1	2		
Highly important for success	2		3		7	3	4	2	4	2	1	2	4		1
Critical for success			1		5	2	7		1	5	4	3	3	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	8	6	7	10	1	1

Table 51. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Leading Subordinates Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success				1		
Sometimes relevant for success			3			
Relevant for success			5	3		
Important for success		1	14	6		
Highly important for success		3	21	9	2	
Critical for success		1	21	10	1	
Totals		5	64	29	3	

Table 52. Importance Rating of Developing Subordinates

DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES. Commitment to train, educate, and challenge all Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates. Developing team players and esprit de corps. Ability to combine teaching and coaching. Creating an atmosphere tolerant of mistakes in the course of learning.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
9.			
Unnecessary for success		2	2%
Sometimes relevant for success		2	2%
Relevant for success		16	16%
Important for success		24	24%
Highly important for success		39	39%
Critical for success		18	18%
Total		101	100%

Developing Subordinates competency was ranked slightly below average among the competencies. Adjutants marked this competency well below average. This could be explained by the fact that a substantial number of adjutants would not have any direct subordinates. One unique trend found only in the Developing Subordinates competency is that lieutenants mark this competency much higher on average than any other pay grade.

One explanation for lieutenants ranking the Developing Subordinates competency higher on average could be that they are in jobs where "the buck stops here" as they are the responsible officer for large amounts of equipment or classified information. These officers usually must delegate most of their authority to enlisted personnel yet they retain most of the responsibility of any lost or damaged equipment. Therefore, it would be imperative that these junior officers in these MOSs do a thorough job in training and developing their subordinates. In addition, logistics, intelligence, and ground supply MOSs marked this competency higher than other MOSs.





Table 53. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Developing Subordinates Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success					2										
Sometimes relevant for success						1							1		
Relevant for success	3		2		5	2	1		1	2					
Important for success	1	2	1		5	2	5	1	2		3	1	1		
Highly important for success	1	1	2		5	3	6		4	5	1	4	7		
Critical for success			1		2		3	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	2	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 54. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Developing Subordinates Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success			1	1		
Sometimes relevant for success			1	1		
Relevant for success			8	7	1	
Important for success			17	6	1	
Highly important for success		4	24	11		
Critical for success		1	13	3	1	
Totals		5	64	29	3	

Table 55. Importance Rating of Setting the Example

10.	SETTING THE EXAMPLE. The most visible facet of leadership: how well a Marine serves as a role model for all others. Personal action demonstrates the highest standards of conduct, ethical behavior, fitness, and appearance. Bearing, demeanor, and self-discipline are elements.	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Unnecessary for success	2	2%
	Sometimes relevant for success	3	3%
	relevant for success 	14	14%
	Important for success 	27	26%
	Highly important for success 	32	31%
	Critical for success 	24	24%
Total		102	100%

Setting the Example competency was ranked slightly below average among the competencies. The only trend noted was that very junior and very senior pay grades mark this competency higher than the captains and majors.





Table 56. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Setting the Example Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success					1	1									
Sometimes relevant for success	1					1							1		
relevant for success	2		2		3		1	1	1	2	1	1			
Important for success		1	1		5	2	5	1	2	2	2	2	4		
Highly important for success	2		3		7	4	4	1	2		1	3	4		1
Critical for success		2			3		5		3	5	2	1	1	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 57. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Setting the Example Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success			1	1		
Sometimes relevant for success			2	1		
relevant for success			10	4		
Important for success		2	15	9	1	
Highly important for success		3	21	7	1	
Critical for success			16	7	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 58. Importance Rating of Ensuring the Well-being of Subordinates

11.	ENSURING THE WELL-BEING OF SUBORDINATES. Genuine interest in the well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on unit mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care of their own.	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Unnecessary for success	3	3%
	Sometimes relevant for success	2	2%
	Relevant for success 	16	16%
	Important for success 	28	27%
	Highly important for success 	33	32%
	Critical for success 	20	20%
Total		102	100%

The Ensuring the Well-being of Subordinates competency was marked slightly below average among the competencies. The only important trend to note is that lieutenant colonels mark this competency much lower on average than the other pay grades (see Table 60). This trend is interesting because as an officer rises in pay grade he/she will have an increasing number of subordinates under their command.





Table 59. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Ensuring the Well-being of Subordinates Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success					2								1		
Sometimes relevant for success						2									
Relevant for success	2		1		5	3			2	2	1				
Important for success	1	2	3		4	1	6	3	3	1	2		2		
Highly important for success	1	1	1		5	1	6		2	4	1	5	6		
Critical for success	1		1		3	1	3		1	2	2	2	1	1	1
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 60. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Ensuring the Well-being of Subordinates Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success			1	2		
Sometimes relevant for success			2			
Relevant for success			8	6	2	
Important for success		1	19	8		
Highly important for success		3	23	7		
Critical for success		1	12	6	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 61. Importance Rating of Communications Skills

<b>COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS.</b> The efficient transmission and receipt of thoughts and ideas that enable and enhance leadership. Equal importance given to listening, speaking, writing, and critical reading skills. Interactive, allowing one to perceive problems and situations, provide concise guidance, and express complex ideas in a form easily understood by everyone. Allows subordinates to ask questions, raise issues, and concerns and venture opinions. Contributes to a leader's ability to motivate as well as counsel.			
<b>12.</b>		<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		3	3%
Relevant for success		7	7%
Important for success		30	29%
Highly important for success		31	30%
Critical for success		31	30%
<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Communications Skills competency was ranked above average among the competencies. Infantry officers' rankings of all the competencies were relatively high when compared with the other MOSs; one of the exceptions being the Communications Skills competency. Infantry officers found this competency to be of much less importance than the other competencies. On the other hand, adjutants, finance officers, and intelligence officers marked the Communications Skills competency relatively high in relation to the other MOSs.

Table 62. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Communications Skills Ratings






	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success					2	1									
Relevant for success			1			3				2	1				
Important for success	1	1			9	2	5	1	2	3	2	1	3		
Highly important for success	1	1	3		6	2	6	1	1	2	2	2	3	1	
Critical for success	3	1	2		2		4	1	5	2	1	4	4		1
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1



Table 63. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Communications Skills Ratings

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success			2	1		
Relevant for success			3	4		
Important for success		3	16	9	2	
Highly important for success		1	22	8		
Critical for success		1	22	7	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 64. Importance Rating of Professional Military Education (PME)

13.	<b>PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME).</b> Commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Marine Corps. Increases the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude. Resources include resident schools; professional qualifications and certification processes; nonresident and other extension courses; civilian educational institution coursework; a personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Commandant's Reading List; participating in discussion groups and military societies; and involvement in learning through new technologies.			
	Unnecessary for success		3	3%
	Sometimes relevant for success		25	25%
	Relevant for success		29	28%
	Important for success		25	25%
	Highly important for success		13	13%
	Critical for success		7	7%
	<b>Total</b>		102	100%

The Professional Military Education competency was the second lowest marked competency. This competency encompasses mostly off-duty education.

This might be viewed as an unwanted and unnecessary workload by the officers. There is a trend of increasing level of importance with increased pay grade (see Table 69). Perhaps the importance of Professional Military Education is not apparent until an officer gains experience.





Table 65. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Professional Military Education (PME) Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success					1	1							1		
Sometimes relevant for success	3	1	3		3	5	3		1	3	1		2		
Relevant for success	1		1		7	1	4	1	1	5	2	3	3		
Important for success			2		5	1	3	2	4		2	2	3		1
Highly important for success	1	2			2		4		1			1	1	1	
Critical for success					1		1		1	1	1	1			
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 66. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Professional Military Education (PME) Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success		1	1	1		
Sometimes relevant for success			18	7		
Relevant for success		2	14	13		
Important for success		2	18	3	2	
Highly important for success			10	3		
Critical for success			4	2	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 67. Importance Rating of Decision Making Ability

DECISION MAKING ABILITY. Viable and timely problem solution. Contributing elements are judgment and decisiveness. Decisions reflect the balance between an optimal solution and a satisfactory, workable solution that generates tempo. Decisions are made within the context of the commander's established intent and the goal of mission accomplishment.			
14. Anticipation, mental agility, intuition, and success are inherent.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		0	0%
Relevant for success		7	7%
Important for success		18	18%
Highly important for success		55	54%
Critical for success		22	22%
<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Decision Making Ability competency was ranked slightly above average among the competencies. Artillery, engineer, and intelligence MOSs ranked the Decision Making Ability competency relatively higher than other MOSs (see Table 68). All pay grades marked Decision Making Ability relatively high in comparison to other competencies.



Table 68. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Decision Making Ability Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success															
Relevant for success	2	1			1	2				1					
Important for success	2		1		4	2	3		1	2	1		2		
Highly important for success	1	1	4		12	4	7	2	4	5	3	6	5		1
Critical for success		1	1		2		5	1	3	1	2	1	3	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 69. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Decision Making Ability Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success						
Relevant for success			6	1		
Important for success		2	10	5	1	
Highly important for success		3	35	16	1	
Critical for success			14	7	1	
Totals		5	65	29	3	

Table 70. Importance Rating of Judgment

15. JUDGMENT. The discretionary aspect of decision making. Draws on core values, knowledge, and personal experience to make wise choices. Comprehends the consequences of contemplated courses of action.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Unnecessary for success		0	0%
Sometimes relevant for success		2	2%
Relevant for success		6	6%
Important for success		29	29%
Highly important for success		39	39%
Critical for success		25	25%
Total		101	100%

The Judgment competency was ranked slightly above average among the competencies. The only trend to note is that adjutants marked this competency well below average (see Table 68).







Table 71. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Judgment Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success						
Sometimes relevant for success			2			
Relevant for success			4	2		
Important for success		4	20	3	2	
Highly important for success			24	15		
Critical for success		1	15	8	1	
Totals		5	65	28	3	

Table 72. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Judgment Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success															
Sometimes relevant for success	1				1										
Relevant for success		1	1		1	2				1					
Important for success	4				4	2	5	1	3	3	2	2	3		
Highly important for success			5		11	3	4	1	4	2	2	4	2		1
Critical for success		2			2	1	6	1	1	2	2	1	5	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	15	3	8	8	6	7	10	1	1

Table 73. Importance Rating of Evaluations

16.	EVALUATIONS. The extent to which this officer serving as a reporting official conducted, or required others to conduct, accurate, uninflated, and timely evaluations.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Unnecessary for success		11	11%
	Sometimes relevant for success		17	17%
	Relevant for success		31	31%
	Important for success		28	28%
	Highly important for success		8	8%
	Critical for success		5	5%
Total			100	100%

The Evaluations competency was the lowest ranked competency. All MOSs marked this competency much lower than other competencies (see Table 73). Lieutenants marked the Evaluations competency relatively higher than other pay grades (see Table 71).




Table 74. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Evaluations Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Unnecessary for success	2	1			2	2	1			2	1				
Sometimes relevant for success			2		3	2	3			2		1	3		1
Relevant for success	2	2	2		6	1	2	1	1	2	3	4	4	1	
Important for success			1		7	1	5	2	5	2	2	1	2		
Highly important for success	1				1		2		1	1		1	1		
Critical for success			1			2			1						
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	13	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 75. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Evaluations Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Unnecessary for success			8	3		
Sometimes relevant for success			9	8		
Relevant for success			21	9	1	
Important for success		4	16	6	2	
Highly important for success			6	2		
Critical for success		1	3	1		
Totals		5	63	29	3	

Table 76. Rating of FITREP System

17.	Summarize your overall evaluation of the FITREP as an assignment/promotion tool using a 1-6 scale where (6) is "outstanding" and (1) means "poor." Please select one rating.	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Poor	1	1%
	Below average	2	2%
	Average 	20	19%
	Good 	46	45%
	Excellent 	30	29%
	Outstanding	4	4%
	<b>Total</b>	103	100%

Overall, most of the officers surveyed have faith in the Marine Corps fitness report system. Seventy-eight percent of the officers rated the system good or better. Only three percent found the system to be below average or poor (see Table 76). The intelligence MOS had the least faith in the system (see Table 77).

Table 77. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and FITREP System Rating

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Poor										1					
Below average												1	1		
Average	1		2		8		1		1		3	2	2		
Good	2	3	3		7	5	6	1	3	7	1	4	3		1
Excellent	2		1		5	2	8	2	4	1	1		4		
Outstanding						1					1			1	
Totals	5	3	6		20	8	15	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 78. Cross-tabulation of Rank and FITREP System Rating

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Poor				1		
Below average			1	1		
Average			9	10	1	
Good		4	30	11	1	
Excellent		1	23	5	1	
Outstanding			2	2		
Totals		5	65	30	3	

Table 79. Results of Favoritism Question

18.	In your opinion, do you believe that some assignments and/or promotions are influenced by some form of favoritism such as nepotism or the "old boys network"? If yes, please explain why you think this occurs.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Yes			
	No			
	Total		101	100%
	<a href="#">VIEW</a> 66 Responses			

Question 18 about nepotism with assignments and/or promotions was the only question in the survey not dealing directly with competencies or competencies. A majority of the 'yes' answers dealt with the assignment process. Whether real or perceived, there was a majority who feel that the monitors give preferential treatment to the people that they know. The respondent who wrote the 65th response who claims to have been a monitor adds some reality to the perception in the response:



There were several occasions when a senior officer called the monitor to influence someone's assignment. More often than not, these calls were successful. Your chances of promotion are greatly increased if someone on the board knows you and thinks highly of you.

Another theme in survey responses was that it certainly helps to know people in high places as claimed by the respondent who wrote the 48th response who claimed to have worked for a couple of General Officers,

I was a General's aide for about a year, serving under two different Generals, thereby receiving two GO-level FITREPS. After my time as an aide, I got to pick, within rather liberal limits, my next assignment. I was also told, time and again, by senior officers, that having two favorable GO-level FITREPS on my record were very good for me.

The respondent who wrote the seventh response brings up the topic of the face validity of the nepotism question. In other words, this respondent felt that this question had little relevance in a survey about Marine Corps Officers' competencies and that this question might be misleading. The respondent's concern that the question is too general and might lead to more "yes" responses is a valid concern and should be noted, but this question on nepotism was intentionally generic in order to lead toward an open question and to receive a more qualitative response than quantitative.

There was a trend of increased perception of nepotism as pay grades increased. Most respondents felt that nepotism or the "old boys' network" was not necessarily a bad thing. This was particularly true if the "old boys' network" or "hookup" was based on performance, i.e., a commanding officer brings in people that he knows and trusts from previous commands. One area where there was agreement among the respondents that nepotism was bad was when there was a perception of individuals receiving higher FITREP scores solely based on nepotism vice on performance.

Chmiel defers to a study by Bernardin and Villanova (1986) who "found that a majority of appraisers and appraisees felt that inaccuracy in performance ratings was more because of deliberate distortion than inadvertent cognitive errors on the part of the raters" (2000,137). Bernardin, in an earlier study with Beatty (1984) discusses the influence of organizational politics on the assessment of staff (Chmiel, 2000, 137).

Marine Corps policy-makers should be concerned that there is some perception of nepotism both in the assignment process as well as in some instances of performance

evaluations. Whether these perceptions are real or not, it is in the Marine Corps' best interest to limit the perception of bias.



Table 80. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Favoritism Results

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Yes	3		4		13	6	7		5	5	4	4	8		1
No	2	3	2		6	2	7	3	3	4	2	3	2	1	
Totals	5	3	6		19	8	14	3	8	9	6	7	10	1	1

Table 81. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Favoritism Results

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Yes		2	36	20	2	
No		2	29	9	1	
Totals		4	65	29	3	

Table 82. Results of Changing of Skills As Officers Progress Question

19.	Do you believe that USMC officer's skills are required to change as they progress through the ranks? If yes, please explain why.	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Yes 	91	91%
	No 	9	9%
	<b>Total</b>	100	100%
	<a href="#">VIEW</a> 90 Responses		

Question 19 asked, "Do you believe that USMC officer's skills are required to change as they progress through the ranks?" Ninety-one percent of the respondents said yes. Fifty percent of the "no" responses were aviators (see

Table 83). In addition, the majority of the "no" responses were majors, 66 percent (see Table 84). It is conceivable that some highly technical jobs do not require a different skill set as the officer progresses in rank, but as one respondent claimed:

Knowledge, skill level, performance, etc., are required to develop and change as rank progresses. I have worked for and never wish to work again for a captain who knew no more than the second lieutenant he should have been developing.

The respondents who answered 'no' may be one of these captains the respondent was referring to. Even though some MOSs are highly technical, skill sets should be required to change. As another respondent stated:

As an officer progresses, he/she must be able to manage and lead in increasingly more complicated situations. In aviation, a "good pilot" (stick and rudder skills) is not always a good mission leader, staff officer, maintenance officer or squadron CO.

Even in technical fields such as aviation, it would be assumed that skill sets are required to change as one gets promoted. The overwhelming majority of the responses were in line with the "Leadership Pipeline" (discussed in chapter three) that skills must change and develop as officers gain responsibility (Charan, Drotter, Noel, 2001).

The underlying principle of the leadership pipeline is that if a leader has not fully developed the requisite skills at a lower level and is subsequently promoted to a higher level then this leader will become more of a liability than an asset. One respondent describes an example of his/her experience of skill requirements changing:

A new Marine Officer is primarily focused upon success at the tactical level. As that officer progresses through the ranks, they become more focused upon the operational and then the strategic level of war. Beyond the level of war, seniority brings more responsibility and higher level considerations. In my MOS, a second lieutenant may be mostly consumed with a radio-based communication architecture and a Battalion Commander's Combat Operations Center.

A major may be concerned with a Marine Expeditionary Unit's communication architecture. As a lieutenant colonel, the focus may be upon providing communication for a Major Subordinate Command or even a Marine Expeditionary Force. Clearly, the skill set and understanding of how to function within a Commander's Staff grows over time.

It is important that leaders develop new skills as responsibility increases otherwise this leader will clog the pipeline and become a liability to the system.

Table 83. Cross-tabulation of Primary Military Occupational Specialty and Changing Skills Question

	Adjutant	Air Control	Artillery	Armor	Aviation Pilot	Aviation Other	Communications	Engineer	Financial	Ground Supply	Infantry	Intelligence	Logistics	Military Police	Public Affairs
Yes	5	2	5		16	8	14	3	7	8	5	6	10	1	1
No		1	1		4				1	1					
Totals	5	3	6		20	8	14	3	8	9	5	6	10	1	1

Table 84. Cross-tabulation of Rank and Changing Skills Question

	2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant	Captain	Major	Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel
Yes		4	60	24	3	
No			3	6		
Totals		4	63	30	3	

Appendix B provides the results of explanations of ‘yes’ responses to changing of skills as officers progress through the ranks question. Appendix C provides additional comments by respondents.

Table 85. Ranking of Competencies by MOS

INFANTRY		ARTILLERY		ENGINEER		AVIATION OTHER		AVIATION PILOT	
1st	Proficiency	1st	Performance	1st	Effectiveness Under Stress	1st	Performance	1st	Performance
2nd	Performance	2nd	Proficiency	2nd	Performance	2nd	Proficiency	2nd	Proficiency
3rd	Leading Subordinates	2nd	Effectiveness Under Stress	2nd	Decision Making Ability	3rd	Effectiveness Under Stress	3rd	Decision Making Ability
4th	Effectiveness Under Stress	2nd	Communications Skills	4th	Courage	3rd	Initiative	4th	Leading Subordinates
4th	Decision Making Ability	2nd	Decision Making Ability	4th	Developing Subordinates	5th	Leading Subordinates	4th	Evaluations
6th	Initiative	6th	Leading Subordinates	4th	Communications Skills	5th	Judgment	6th	Initiative
6th	Judgment	6th	Judgment	4th	Judgment	7th	Decision Making Ability	6th	Setting the Example
8th	Courage	8th	Developing Subordinates	8th	Proficiency	8th	Developing Subordinates	8th	Effectiveness Under Stress
8th	Developing Subordinates	8th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	8th	Initiative	8th	Setting the Example	8th	Communications Skills
10th	Setting the Example	10th	Initiative	8th	Leading Subordinates	10th	Communications Skills	10th	Courage
10th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	10th	Setting the Example	11th	Setting the Example	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.
12th	Communications Skills	12th	Courage	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	12th	Evaluations	12th	Developing Subordinates
13th	Professional Military Education	12th	Evaluations	13th	Professional Military Education	12th	Courage	13th	Professional Military Education
14th	Evaluations	14th	Professional Military Education	13th	Evaluations	14th	Professional Military Education	14th	Evaluations

MILITARY POLICE		ADJUTANT		AIR CONTROL		COMMUNICATIONS		FINANCIAL	
1st	Performance	1st	Communications Skills	1st	Proficiency	1st	Performance	1st	Decision Making Ability
1st	Proficiency	2nd	Performance	1st	Setting the Example	2nd	Proficiency	2nd	Communications Skills
1st	Courage	3rd	Proficiency	3rd	Performance	3rd	Effectiveness Under Stress	3rd	Initiative
1st	Effectiveness Under Stress	4th	Effectiveness Under Stress	3rd	Courage	3rd	Initiative	4th	Setting the Example
1st	Leading Subordinates	4th	Initiative	3rd	Communications Skills	3rd	Leading Subordinates	5th	Performance
1st	Developing Subordinates	4th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	3rd	Judgment	6th	Decision Making Ability	5th	Leading Subordinates
1st	Setting the Example	7th	Leading Subordinates	7th	Effectiveness Under Stress	6th	Judgment	5th	Judgment
1st	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	8th	Decision Making Ability	7th	Decision Making Ability	8th	Setting the Example	8th	Proficiency
1st	Decision Making Ability	9th	Developing Subordinates	9th	Developing Subordinates	8th	Communications Skills	8th	Developing Subordinates
1st	Judgment	9th	Setting the Example	9th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	10th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	10th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.
11th	Initiative	9th	Judgment	11th	Initiative	11th	Developing Subordinates	10th	Evaluations
11th	Communications Skills	9th	Evaluations	11th	Leading Subordinates	12th	Courage	12th	Effectiveness Under Stress
11th	Professional Military Education	13th	Courage	11th	Professional Military Education	13th	Professional Military Education	12th	Professional Military Education
14th	Evaluations	14th	Professional Military Education	14th	Evaluations	14th	Evaluations	14th	Courage

**Table (continued) Ranking of Competencies by MOS**

GROUND SUPPLY		INTELLIGENCE		LOGISTICS		PUBLIC AFFAIRS		AVERAGE	
1st	Leading Subordinates	1st	Performance	1st	Initiative	1st	Initiative	1st	Performance
2nd	Performance	2nd	Proficiency	2nd	Performance	1st	Developing Subordinates	2nd	Proficiency
3rd	Proficiency	2nd	Communications Skills	3rd	Proficiency	1st	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	3rd	Decision Making Ability
4th	Initiative	4th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	3rd	Judgment	1st	Communications Skills	4th	Initiative
4th	Setting the Example	5th	Developing Subordinates	5th	Communications Skills	5th	Effectiveness Under Stress	4th	Leading Subordinates
6th	Developing Subordinates	5th	Decision Making Ability	5th	Decision Making Ability	5th	Leading Subordinates	4th	Communications Skills
7th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	7th	Effectiveness Under Stress	7th	Effectiveness Under Stress	5th	Setting the Example	4th	Judgment
7th	Decision Making Ability	7th	Leading Subordinates	7th	Leading Subordinates	5th	Decision Making Ability	8th	Effectiveness Under Stress
7th	Judgment	9th	Initiative	9th	Developing Subordinates	5th	Judgment	9th	Developing Subordinates
10th	Effectiveness Under Stress	9th	Judgment	10th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	10th	Performance	9th	Setting the Example
10th	Communications Skills	11th	Setting the Example	11th	Setting the Example	10th	Proficiency	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.
12th	Courage	12th	Courage	12th	Courage	10th	Courage	12th	Courage
13th	Professional Military Education	13th	Professional Military Education	13th	Professional Military Education	10th	Professional Military Education	13th	Professional Military Education
14th	Evaluations	14th	Evaluations	13th	Evaluations	14th	Evaluations	14th	Evaluations

**Table 86. Ranking of Competencies by Pay Grade**

LIEUTENANT		CAPTAIN		MAJOR		LIEUTENANT COLONEL		AVERAGE	
1st	Performance	1st	Performance	1st	Performance	1st	Performance	1st	Performance
2nd	Developing Subordinates	2nd	Proficiency	2nd	Proficiency	2nd	Leading Subordinates	2nd	Proficiency
3rd	Effectiveness Under Stress	3rd	Decision Making Ability	3rd	Decision Making Ability	3rd	Proficiency	3rd	Leading Subordinates
3rd	Initiative	4th	Communications Skills	4th	Judgment	3rd	Setting the Example	3rd	Decision Making Ability
3rd	Leading Subordinates	5th	Effectiveness Under Stress	5th	Initiative	3rd	Decision Making Ability	5th	Initiative
3rd	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	6th	Leading Subordinates	6th	Leading Subordinates	6th	Communications Skills	6th	Communications Skills
3rd	Proficiency	7th	Initiative	7th	Communications Skills	6th	Professional Military Education	7th	Effectiveness Under Stress
8th	Setting the Example	8th	Judgment	8th	Effectiveness Under Stress	6th	Judgment	7th	Judgment
8th	Communications Skills	9th	Developing Subordinates	9th	Setting the Example	9th	Initiative	9th	Setting the Example
8th	Decision Making Ability	10th	Setting the Example	10th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	9th	Developing Subordinates	10th	Developing Subordinates
11th	Judgment	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	11th	Developing Subordinates	11th	Courage	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.
12th	Evaluations	12th	Courage	12th	Courage	11th	Ensuring Well-Being of Sub.	12th	Professional Military Education
13th	Courage	13th	Professional Military Education	13th	Professional Military Education	13th	Effectiveness Under Stress	13th	Courage
14th	Professional Military Education	14th	Evaluations	14th	Evaluations	13th	Evaluations	14th	Evaluations

## F. CONCLUSION

This survey was successful in accomplishing its purpose of shedding light on how perceptions of the importance of competencies differ among officers from various MOSs. In addition, the survey indicated several important trends among the competencies. The survey demonstrated that there are some competencies that are important to every MOS as well as some competencies that are more important to certain MOSs than others. For instance, all MOSs ranked the Performance and Proficiency competencies higher than the other competencies. In addition, all MOSs ranked the evaluations and PME competencies the lowest in importance. The high rankings of the *Performance* and *Proficiency* competencies as well as the low ranking of the PME competency are consistent with the results of the quantitative regression study of the FITREPs.

Another important trend that the survey demonstrated was that different MOSs do differ substantially among some competencies. For example, communications and engineer MOSs ranked the *Effectiveness Under Stress* competency relatively very high, whereas, adjutants and financial officers ranked this competency low in importance. Another difference among MOSs is in the ranking of the *Communications Skills* competency. This competency is very important to adjutants, financial, and intelligence MOSs, but ranks very low among infantry and ground supply MOSs.

The differences among the MOSs tend to support to the hypothesis of the quantitative regression study of the FITREPs that some FITREP competencies may be more important in one MOS from than another. Unlike the quantitative regression study, this qualitative survey demonstrated that there is a practical difference among the MOSs in the level of importance of some of the competencies. Therefore, this lends support to the hypothesis that FITREP competencies should not be weighted equally in appraising USMC officers for promotion and assignment.

A third trend that the survey demonstrated is that substantial majority, 91 percent, of officers feel that skill sets are required to change as officers advance in pay grade. Further support of this perception is demonstrated in the difference of rankings among the competencies for the various pay grades. The most important example comes from



the ranking of the Performance competency. There is a clear trend of an increase in importance of the Performance competency as the respondents' pay grade increases.

This trend is consistent with the quantitative regression study and the literature review. One important item to note, poor performing officers on average do not stay in the USMC as long as higher performing officers. This will lead to a selection bias of those officers who have remained in the Corps long enough to pin on lieutenant colonel.

Even though this survey provides utility in the examination of these three trends, the utility is limited due to the self selection bias of the sample surveyed. In order to help overcome this self selection bias, it is recommended that an additional survey which samples officers across the entire USMC be conducted. Furthermore, an attempt should be made to survey those officers who are currently in duties within their primary MOS. This will help ensure that the respondents can more accurately remember which competencies are most closely related to their primary MOS.

## **V. CIVILIAN SURVEY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

It was the intent of this thesis to conduct surveys in human resource management and internal promotion systems with ten large U.S. organizations. The purpose of this survey was to gain data to compare the HR functions and internal promotion systems of multinational market organizations - and the USMC. To the surprise of faculty, and disappointment of the authors, it is the policy of most large U.S. organizations to not participate in external surveys.

Therefore, the survey was extended to several medium sized organizations, both civilian, quasi-military and some military personnel functions, including the USMC. For reasons of privacy, their names will not be disclosed in this paper. Because of the limited number, but wide range of organizations, it is necessary to provide some context for the HR survey. To do this, we will review the definitions of Bach and Sisson in order to recognize some of the organizational structures that are prevalent in today's world. Bach and Sisson in their discussion on personnel management introduce the concept of "lean" versus "extended" organizations (2000). In describing lean organizations, Bach and Sisson refer to Rees, et al., (1996:73) who provide the following summary:

Lean ways of organizing . . . involve the marrying together of the hardware of total quality management (TQM) quality procedures and associated 'Japanese' production processes (e.g. just in time (JIT), statistical process control, supply-chain management, total productive maintenance, material resources planning, zero defects/right first time, benchmarking) with the 'software' of 'high commitment' human resource management (HRM) and work practices (e.g. careful recruitment and selection, with emphasis on traits and competency, extensive use of systems of communication, teamworking with flexible job design, emphasis on training and learning, involvement in decision making with responsibility, performance appraisal with tight links to contingent pay).

Also involved is the use of information and communication technologies, associated with business process engineering, making it possible to move from function-centered organization, from differentiated specialists to multi-disciplinary teamworking, from 'unresponsive' bureaucracy to flatter hierarchies (2000, 44).

In contrast, the extended organization, is summarized as follows:

Business growth for much of the twentieth century has been achieved through the development of increasingly bureaucratic and integrated corporations . . . capable of passing information and directions from executive level to the shopfloor. Amidst changes in the breadth, nature and sources of competitive pressures, however, classic bureaucracies appear to be fragmenting once again. New structures, termed variously ‘virtual’, ‘networked’ or ‘extended’, have begun to emerge. Production organized increasingly across national boundaries has stretched organizations and required adaptability in corporate structures and management styles.

Information storage, diffusion and retrieval within firms has been improved by emerging telecommunications and computing technology, diminishing the requirements for extensive managerial hierarchies. In new markets, driven by technological or knowledge-based innovation, smaller, nimbler organizations have been able to compete effectively against slower-moving large corporations. Consortium-based or networked organizations have emerged in which specialist products and services are provided by organizations working together rather than by single entities.

Baumol, et al., provide discussion about the input substitution of information labor for other types of labor, and the relative variations between information and output/productivity; withal, we are living in an “information revolution” (1989, 153).

It is reasonable to expect that any senior USMC officer, upon reading the preceding paragraphs, would recognize much of the business parlance of the above summaries. This demonstrates that the USMC is also undergoing rapid transformation – alongside the corporate world. A thesis could be developed around the previous four paragraphs, suffice to note that there are many military analogies and comparisons.

A simple example: the success of Osama Bin Laden in continuing to evade capture, and the continuing action of dispersed, loosely organized terrorist networks demonstrates the difficulty in seeking out and closing with a smaller, nimbler organization. The advent of network-centric warfare amidst the well-cited revolution in military affairs (RMA) is a basic example of how the military is attempting to grapple

with these new types of analogous ‘market threats’.<sup>10</sup> The success of this organization (sic USMC) could be measured by their ability in destroying these forces; however, the “consortium-based” or “networked organizations” described above bear witness to the fact that, alone, the USMC could never complete the strategic mission.

Another quick example: the US Army, USMC, and the Coalition Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC), all favored different tactical approaches to Baghdad - but all involved the use of Armor. Consequently, new discussion has come forward about the definition of the types of force to be used in this complex battle-space environment. The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division's ORBAT consisted of three Regimental Combat Teams (RCTs) - each consisting of three marine battalions reinforced with: (1) a light armor reconnaissance battalion, (2) artillery regiment, (3) tank squadron, (4) engineer battalion and, (5) Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAVs) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> assault amphibian battalions. Their strategy remains mostly a combined arms approach.

However, the strategy of mounting raids and encircling Baghdad was the plan of the CFLCC. This may imply a "strike" capability; however, we historically connect "strike" activities with special-forces; whereas, combat teams are more readily associated with a combined arms approach as demonstrated by the USMC. So we can identify differences in the application of the same organizational resources in dealing with external threats. One approach provides an integrated ‘extended’ arms approach, the other, a ‘lean’ high-commitment application of force.

The relevance of this discussion is borne out by the two chapter discussion presented by Bach and Sisson on how to re-engineer personnel management within these types of organizations to provide sustainable and competitive organizations (2000). In conducting a survey with civilian organizations, it is hoped to provide some

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<sup>10</sup> This stated, the following comment from Bing West writing about the current war in Iraq should be acknowledged: “Network centricity, however, is of limited utility in a ground war until there is digital connectivity down to at least the rifle company and individual combat patrol” (West, 2004). Additionally, a recent article by David Talbot from MIT’s Magazine of Innovation Technology featured a cover story on the failure of networking technologies in Iraq (2004, 36).

recommendations to the USMC on how to better adapt their promotion/assignment function to meet a rapidly changing world environment.

**Lean organizations.** In the lean organization, high profile roles are identified with change agent, strategy, internal contracting, and operations (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 59). Rees, et al., state that lean organizations “require a continuous, proactive process of managerial intervention; an increasing devolution and decentralization of a decision-making authority – the empowerment of employees” (1996, 86). In summary, Bach and Sisson suggest that the personnel management role in lean organizations is mostly “reactive, facilitative” – however, in this environment, if the HR function is proactive in remaining engaged with the organizational agenda, the organization “might neglect the human dimension in the headlong pursuit of technicist solutions” (2000, 64).

**Extended organizations.** In the sub-contracting world of the extended organization, “as bureaucratic and financial ties are increased, the formal content of contracts diminishes, is less prescriptive in nature, and is relied upon less” (Bach & Sisson, 2000, 77). More notably, “performance monitoring is not prohibited by such arrangements, but may be less formal or delegated to the vendor” (2000, 77). Bach and Sisson continue to explain how “a constellation of factors tend to foster low-trust or distanced relationships between the [contracting] parties” and, “employment relationships are inevitably affected by this sort of environment” (2000, 77). In this dynamic context, communication skills, “arms-length” out-sourcing negotiations, and lengthy, uncertain, tendering and project management periods, amongst other flexibility challenges, can provide challenging personnel management processes. Bach and Sisson suggest that “performance targets [necessary for useful performance appraisal] may also be determined in conjunction with communities and service users affected, and may thus turn on measures of effectiveness as well as efficiency” (2000, 85).

Withal, these two basic approaches to organizational understanding demonstrate that not only are large organizations, both civilian and military, undergoing considerable changes in their external environments, but also whole-scale adaptation to meet these new forces head on. This obliges the HR managers to be cognizant of these new challenges and ready to adapt to new ways of managing their human capital.

A discussion session was presented at the Naval Postgraduate School in January 2005 by four USMC combat veterans from the war in Iraq. This presentation and question time very clearly indicated that adaptability was very necessary for success. An informal interview was conducted with the presenters following the presentation and, to a man, they all agreed that the inclusion of a competence for “adaptability” would be very useful. Regardless of their billeted job, they all had stories of where they were required to adapt, and with considerable change - to be successful in their jobs.

The Australian officer performance appraisal report has the following competencies. For comparison, they are aligned as close as possible with the USMC in Figure 21.

<b>Australian</b>		<b>USMC</b>
1.	Appraising the performance of subordinates	Evaluations
2.	Job competence	Proficiency
3.	Self development	Professional Military Education (PME)
4.	Productivity	Performance
5.	Army ethos	Setting the Example / Courage
6.	Human relations	Ensuring Well-being of Subordinates
7.	Judgment and common sense	
8.	Oral communication	Communications Skills
9.	Written communication	
10.	Analysis	Judgment
11.	Foresight	
12.	Responsibility	
13.	Adaptability	Initiative
14.	Decisiveness	Decision Making Ability
15.	Leadership	Leading Subordinates
		Developing Subordinates
		Effectiveness Under Stress

Figure 21. Comparison between USMC and Australian Performance Appraisal Competencies

Of particular note here is the fine difference between ‘adaptability’ and ‘initiative’. Adaptability is specifically rated against ‘change’; whereas, in the USMC, ‘initiative’ is rated against ‘direction’ – without deference to a changing environment. The Australian report appears to break down the mission, compared with the USMC report that applies a lot of weight to the leadership element.

The USMC precept, which supports the “best and fully qualified”, and is used to direct selection boards - provides the following guidance: “A critical goal of the Marine Corps is to encourage - to demand – innovation and efficiency to ensure that we retain an **adaptive**, flexible, and effective naval force able to anticipate events and win across the spectrum of conflict” (USMC Precept, 2004, 5). In the U.S. Army, “the vision of Force XXI described a new standard of competence” (Lewis, 2004, 71). “Qualities [author’s note: *not qualifications*] such as vision, *innovation*, **adaptability**, and *creativity* and the ability to simplify complexities and clarify ambiguities – all while operating under stress become even more important for junior officers as they **adapt** to the pace and lethality of the twenty-first century battlefield” (Lewis, 2004, 70). [Italics added for emphasis] Based upon the USMC “critical goal”, and similar challenges for the USMC as described by the U.S. Army - it is recommended that the USMC revisit the weighting that it currently applies to “initiative”, and provide more opportunity for assessment of the “adapt and overcome” abilities of its officers.

In selection processes, employers rank applicants on their amount of human capital (Schulz, 1961; Becker, 1964; Mincer, 1974) or training costs necessary to carry out a job (Thurow, 1975). In this ranking, employers have to cope with uncertainty and can only use indicators, like educational characteristics, to estimate the (potential) productivity of labour suppliers (Spence, 1973; Thurow, 1975). The choice of these indicators is a central issue in the selection processes and the main problem employers face in the selection processes is to determine the most reliable indicators of (potential) productivity.

An important additional elaboration of this basic theoretical framework comes from the matching theory. This theory asserts that productivity is not only dependent on the characteristics of employees but also on the match between acquired and required skills (Tinbergen, 1956; Hartog and Visser, 1987; Hartog, 1992). Especially interesting for this study is the acknowledgement that job characteristics - in particular skill requirements are important in selection processes. Some jobs may have in optimal match with some labour suppliers, whereas for other jobs other applicants will be most productive. Thus, if we imagine a labour queue for a specific vacancy consisting of various applicants, the ranking of these applicants depends on characteristics of the vacancy for which the selection has to be made. Note that this has serious consequences for screening criteria used in the selection of screening graduates. It implies that the value of screening criteria differs between different types of vacancies and that, for

example, the advantage of having high grades may be relevant for one type of vacancy and irrelevant for another.

Based on the idea that the match between acquired and required skills is important, it seems relevant to distinguish between different types of jobs, each one being characterized by a different role of educational qualifications (Wolf & van der Velden, 2001, 318).

Wolf and van der Velden continue to explain, “we expect that selection criteria that are most directly related to specific competences to be most important in selection processes for professional jobs and least important in selection processes for general jobs” (2001, 319). The theme of this paper is that it is appropriate to selectively ascribe competencies for specific jobs based upon experience, qualifications, and other indicators of job productivity. This supports the hypothesis that different competencies are more or less useful across different MOS.

The relationship between specific competences; and the other human-capital characteristics - such as grades, study duration, and work experience – is less unambiguous. Although it is obvious that there will be a positive effect of human-capital-related characteristics in all selection processes, differences between the three types of jobs are more difficult to predict. The reason for this is that these characteristics can produce different signals.

The same line of argumentation holds for work experience. On the one hand, work experience might signal specific competences and will therefore be an important selection criterion in selection processes for professional jobs. On the other hand, work experience might be used as a signal for more general competences in which it will also be an important criterion in selection processes for general jobs. Because of these different signals, we are not able to present specific hypotheses on expected differences in the use of these selection criteria between the three types of jobs (Wolf & van der Velden, 2001, 318).

The intent of the survey is, therefore, to determine if large organizations that have many subordinate functions also apply different selection processes to different job characteristics - to align HR processes with the organizational objectives of that job function.

Before progressing to the survey design it is appropriate to quickly discuss a new practice that has become more popular amongst non-military organizations called



‘assessment centers’. Assessment centers use a range of methods to collect data for use in promotion and selection. Chmiel describes the following methods (2000, 29):

- Observation (perhaps guided by a category or classification system).
- Description of a particular behavior.
- Ratings of observed behavior and reports on the individual’s performance.
- Questions and other enquiries producing qualitative data.
- Standard tests of cognitive functioning, attainment, motor coordination and perception.
- Gathering data on perceptual and cognitive performance in specific laboratory or site conditions.

Chmiel continues: “Assessment centers produce a job relevant account of each candidate on the basis of the pattern of grades (3) and test scores (6), in combination with the verbal reports and descriptions produced by the assessors who interviewed (4) and observed (1)” (2000, 29).

## **B. SURVEY DESIGN**

“Monitoring the returns of questionnaires is an important part of the study [in the social sciences]” (Wagenaar & Babbie, 1998, 150). “Some find that multiple research strategies are the most effective, a process known as triangulation” (Wagenaar & Babbie, 1998, 51).

Research design involves developing strategies for executing scientific inquiry. It involves specifying precisely what you want to find out and determining the most efficient and effective strategies for doing so. Appropriate research designs enable the social scientist to make observations and interpret the results.

Social scientists typically have one or more of the following as goals for their research: exploration, description, and explanation. Exploratory studies are often done when a researcher is examining a new interest, or when the subject of study is relatively uncharted. They help to determine the feasibility of a larger scale study and to develop the methods for such a study. The researcher's intent in a descriptive study is to observe and describe some segment of social reality. Explanatory studies are undertaken to identify possible causal variables of a given social phenomenon, thereby contributing to understanding.

The intent with the HRM survey leans more towards a descriptive study, rather than an explanatory study. It is intended to observe the HRM processes of some large organizations in order to present a brief summary of their HRM plan in order to compare with the USMC processes. It is not our intent to provide a detailed explanation of the organizational processes, but to provide a broad comparison of their HRM plan and, if identified, how it links into organizational strategy.

Social scientists typically study individual people as their units of analysis, although they do so in aggregate form. But they also frequently study social groups, such as families. Even though the unit of analysis is the group, characteristics of the group may be derived from the characteristics of individual members. Formal social organizations, like a corporation, are also a unit of analysis. Finally, social artifacts are the products of social beings or their behavior and can also be analyzed.

The survey is a study of the organizational unit. Therefore, the respondent represents the “unit of analysis”. For this reason, we approached the HR manager in each organization who is more likely to have a complete, up-to-date, and working knowledge of how the organization’s HRM processes are applied.

It is critically important to identify the units of analysis in a study accurately. Failure to do so may result in two logical errors: the ecological fallacy and reductionism. Committing the ecological fallacy involves gathering data on one unit of analysis but making assertions regarding another. Reductionism refers to an overly strict limitation on the kinds of concepts and variables to be considered in understanding a social phenomenon. Both errors involve misuse of the unit of analysis. Regardless of the unit of analysis employed, it is important to specify clearly what is examined. (Wagenaar & Babbie, 1998, 51).

The ecological fallacy is a situation that can occur when a researcher or analyst makes an inference about an individual - based on aggregate data for a group. It is not the intent of the authors to make sweeping inferences about non-military HRM processes and their potential application to the USMC HRM Processes. It is the intent of the authors to provide some comparison with the USMC, in order to identify different HRM methods of selection that may be useful in the more complex environment of today.

Reductionism is “an attempt or tendency to explain a complex set of facts, entities, phenomena, or structures by another, simpler set” ([www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com)). There is an easy temptation to say that a particular set of structures used by large non-

military organizations may help explain the success, or limited utility of another HRM process. Military organizations are a subset of society. Although they must reflect societal value, they have a completely different role to other government departments. The mission of the USMC often involves the application of violence to achieve an end. A different culture is required in order to achieve this output. It is acknowledged that there are many differences between the USMC and other organizational structures; however, that does not totally preclude the USMC from seeking to improve their HRM processes with potentially better practices used by other organizations.

### **C. DATA**

The survey was developed with web-based survey software. Respondents were guaranteed confidence in accordance with the Institute of Research Board (IRB) requirements. Senior HR managers from three U.S. military organizations (including responses from six USMC HR managers from HQ USMC), a quasi-military U.S. organization, an overseas military organization, and several non-military U.S. organizations responded to the survey. The survey consisted of true/false, likert scale, and open ended questions. A copy of the survey is at Appendix C. The results are summarized and discussed in the following section.

### **D. SURVEY RESULTS**

After giving their title and organizational name, respondents were asked to describe the mission/charter/core business of their organization. Respondents provided succinct responses that included such statements as ‘improve’, ‘provide highest quality’, ‘optimize’, ‘properly manage’, and ‘provide the best’. None of the respondents deferred directly to their organizational goals, preferring to summarize these goals into a single statement.

The next question addressed promotion/selection practices that are used by the organization. The results are graphed in Table 87.

‘Other practices’ recorded the highest return. Those practices not included in the survey and used by the respondents were recorded as follows:

- Education performance

- Tenure
- PC skills testing
- Behavioral-based methodology
- Centralized board selection

Educational qualifications, one-on-one interviews, employer references, and life history followed as those practices used by the respondents. The key difference to note is that, once selected to become officers, the USMC relies mostly upon FITREP data and qualifications.

Table 87. Staff promotion/selection practices used by organizations


















Which of the following staff promotion/selection practices does your organization use? Check all that apply.		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
One-on-one interviews		7	44%
Group-panel interviews		4	25%
Educational qualifications		13	81%
Application form		4	25%
Employer references		5	31%
Life history		5	31%
Questionnaire		2	13%
Personality questionnaire		0	0%
Simulation exercise		1	6%
Graphology		0	0%
Medical Screen		4	25%
Peers as interviewers		4	25%
Organizational tests		1	6%
Assessment centers		3	19%
<a href="#">VIEW</a> Other, Please Specify		14	88%

Table 88. Are tests and practices tailored differently to different departments?

5. Are your tests/practices tailored differently to different departments?	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes 	2	14%
No 	12	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>

The two respondents who answered that tests/practices are tailored differently were both civilian organizations. They recognized that some departments require a different set of tests in order to correctly identify suitable personnel for that particular department. It is contended in this paper that a similar approach may be adapted to particular USMC MOS that require specific skill sets.

Table 89. Should selection practices be tailored to suit requirements for different jobs?

7. Do you believe that staff promotion/selection practices should be tailored to suit the specific requirements for different jobs?	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes 	9	56%
No 	7	44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

As noted earlier in the literature review, generic competencies are suitable for generic jobs; however HRM involves tailoring requirements for 'specialist' jobs. The USMC respondents were split 50/50 on this response. This demonstrates that amongst the USMC manpower specialists were some officers who believed that the selection practices should be related to the requirements for a specific MOS. Some of the responses for those who answered 'yes' are outlined below:

- Should be tailored to ensure success at higher level of responsibility.
- Officers selected to command an Infantry Unit should only be Infantry officers, same for Armor units and Armor officers, Engineers, Field Artillery, etc.
- Best and most fully qualified is standard for promotion for officers; job requirements are considered but are not 'quota's/targets'. Enlisted promotions do consider job requirements/vacancy driven.




- Each position and/or job series may have different core competency requirements.
- Having one standard presumably garners the best individuals who meet that standard, however, it may not garner the best individuals necessary to work in the specific functional areas of the organization.
- Increase quality of candidates hired. Tailored/customized solutions should be balanced with need to have consistent, standard processes which are efficient and promote savings.

Although tests/practices are not tailored differently in military organizations, the above responses clearly recognize the need for tailored promotion/assignment processes according to the specific competencies required for the specified position, or MOS.

Question nine asked, “How often do you redefine your staff promotion/selection criteria in accordance with changing external environments?” Most non-military organizations recognized themselves as operating in “mature” industries. These non-military organizations also recognized the need to modify criteria to meet ‘fluctuating economic conditions’ and ‘very long business cycles’. This identifies a response of the promotion/selection criteria to the external environment of the organization. One organization, although recognizing the long cycles of market changes, also responded that they still redefine their criteria ‘roughly every 3-5 years’.

The USMC respondents answered the question with regard to ‘vacancies’ as a criteria for promotion – and noted that these ‘criteria’ were advised in the precept. The precept only outlines those MOSs that are critically short with a percentage description of the shortfall. Two USMC respondents noted that the USMC does not promote or assign by MOS, but by ‘best qualified’ – concurrently filling the shortfalls as best as possible. Other military organizations also responded that they “rarely” redefine their promotion/selection criteria. Within this context, organizations were then asked the following question outlined in Table 90.

Table 90. Are well-rounded “broad person-oriented” leaders more successful in interpreting the external environment than a “focused competence-oriented” leader?

10.	Do you believe that a well-rounded 'broad person-oriented' leader is more successful in interpreting the external environment than a 'focused competence-oriented' leader?		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Yes			
	No			
	Sometimes			

This question referenced discussion by Roe and van der Berg (2003, 257-287) who provide the following summary of 'broad-person' orientation:

Since people increasingly have to work under changeable circumstances and to perform tasks that cannot be known in advance, one might return to the broad person-oriented assessment of former days. Selection can be based on a personal profile, constructed by using an encompassing assessment battery, which covers a wide range of competencies (abilities, aptitudes, character traits, temperaments, interests, etc.), from which the suitability for several types of tasks or missions can be derived (2003, 278).

Although this approach is not espoused in any official capacity by the USMC – it appears to provide the rationale for the current process of USMC promotion and assignment. Also, as USMC officers reach the rank of colonel, they are assigned a generic MOS code that represents the 'staff' rank – with the expectations that they are sufficiently 'well-rounded' to lead at the higher levels of the organization. However, is there any particular disadvantage in having a Brigadier General commanding a USMC information systems program – who has never commanded a signals regiment? If the officer has accumulated a wealth of experience and training in information technology – then it is likely that the officer will provide considerable comparative advantage to the position. Some of the benefits of promoting (or 'streaming') a person in this position may be that they have up-to-date knowledge of the following areas:

- The history and current structure of the design factors of the organization.
- Market knowledge of the specialist industry.
- Market contacts.
- A particular interest in that area to which they have committed so much time.



- Specialist training relating to the specified functional area of management.

There are a range of other benefits, suffice to note that the officer is able to provide context as well as draw on a wide range of past experience to provide the best options for senior leaders. Respondents who answered 'sometimes' were asked to provide further explanation. The responses are bulleted below:

- For officers 'yes', for most enlisted grades, no. I think current USMC system is fair and considers USMC needs and individual performance.
- It depends on the task assigned. Usually broad oriented is best, but particular tasks require a narrow focus.
- Competence oriented leader may not have broad perspective, nor interest in drawing conclusions that are informed by or have data points that originate outside area of competence/expertise. Broad, person-oriented skill set helps identify and interpret/understand environmental signals.

The third respondent demonstrated some understanding of the role of a leader in interpreting external environments for the organization. The respondents, as a collection, appeared to understand that broad-person oriented leaders are generally required for senior leadership in the organization where specialist skills are not a prerequisite. With this in mind, the next question asked respondents if internally promoted personnel generally provide better leaders for the organization. The results are outlined in Table 91.

Table 91. Are internally promoted personnel generally better leaders in your organization?

12. Are internally promoted personnel generally better leaders in your organization?		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes		9	75%
No		3	25%
Total		12	100%
<a href="#">VIEW</a> 11 Responses			

Respondents were allowed to provide written comments on this question. Those comments are bulleted below. Where respondents used their organizational name, a generic descriptor is substituted.



- [Non-military] almost exclusively promotes from within. We genuinely consider our people to be our most important asset. Promotion from within recognizes this value.
- [Quasi-military] is highly complex and the knowledge gained from working one's way up is important for success.
- We have many unusual practices and procedures and internally promoted people begin their new jobs knowing how to get things done.
- If the question is do officers who have served in a specific type of organization generally do better with the same type of organization, the answer is yes. If the question is related to how we select - allowing commanders to pick whomever they like best or centrally selecting based on files and broad assessments, then the answer is no. A central board will generally produce a better result.
- All leaders are internally promoted. Each leader comes with a different set of experiences and ideas.
- It depends . . . the organization needs a mixture of talents with diverse backgrounds, having internal promotions is also beneficial to the continuity of the organization, but the organization must manage the balance.
- A leader in the Marine Corps has gone through the rites of passage to earn the title of "Marine". He/she knows the inner workings that come from being in the organization and can identify ways to improve it.
- We promote by year group by merit.



Question thirteen asked respondents: "What percentage of your senior executives are internally promoted?" For military organizations, 100% was the expected, and confirmed response. The quasi-military organization reported 78%, and the non-military organizations reported between "50%" to "vast majority" responses. Clear benefits of internally promoted personnel is that they are already familiar with the design factors of the organization. This provides a cost benefit to 'extended' organizations because the personnel are not required to be trained/inducted into the organizational design factors and culture. However, it may be expected that the leaner the organization – the less internally promoted personnel may be expected.

One USMC respondent noted that Lieutenant General and General were appointed by congress. This demonstrates that the “Strategy Classification” as discussed earlier has particular relevance to the HRM strategic process for the USMC. The processes must differ according to not only the internal environment, but also the external environment (Ferris, Rowland, Buckley, 1990, 21). This response validated the articulation of our next question which asked, “Do you have a performance appraisal for all staff?” The only respondent who replied no was a USMC respondent. Because it was expected that most respondents would reply in the affirmative, the survey requested that the respondents identify and rank the assessed competencies, and how often they were assessed. The results are bulleted on the next page.

Table 92. Comparison of USMC and other Assessed Competencies

Non USMC	USMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance appraisals are conducted annually. <b>Generally based on business results rather than competency assessment.</b> With that said, how an individual achieves the result is critically important.</li> <li>• Most employees are reviewed annually. Here are the elements from the most used appraisal form: project and work responsibilities; individual and team contributions; leadership and entrepreneurship; management of resources and activities; institutional contributions and citizenship; areas for improvement and/or growth. <b>The weighting of these elements varies by individual.</b></li> <li>• The following are assessed annually, as a minimum. Leadership, loyalty, duty, respect, self-less service, honor, integrity, personal courage, technical and tactical competence, physical fitness. [Military]</li> <li>• All criteria are assessed annually: Leadership Command Support Professional Knowledge</li> <li>• Professional Expertise (5); Command or Organizational Climate (7); Military Bearing Character (4); Teamwork (6); Mission Accomplishment (2); Leadership (1); Tactical Performance (3). [Military]</li> <li>• <b>The competencies and skills are job specific so I cannot rank them.</b> We appraise all employees annually on their anniversary date.</li> <li>• Every 12 months. [Military]</li> <li>• Performance (utilization and sales) Overall business performance (<b>financial results</b>) Contribution to people development or intellectual capital development. <b>Other consulting competencies.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annually performance appraisals.</li> <li>• The USMC PES order has all of this stuff for Marines; I also evaluate two civilians. Performance reviews are done annually; each employee job has a 'PD' (Position Description) that is used to derive critical elements that are used for performance appraisal. The PD's are reviewed by classifiers in civilian HR function who ensure they are in accordance with regulations/criteria for billet grade.</li> <li>• Annual review of all aspects of performance.</li> <li>• Chain of command stops at the general officer level.</li> <li>• 1) Leadership 2) Job performance Assessed continually, but officially once a year.</li> </ul>

Table 93. Do you have a periodical performance appraisal report for all staff?

14. Do you have a periodical performance appraisal report for all staff?	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes 	15	94%
No 	1	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question 15 asked. “If yes, please identify and rank the assessed competencies, and how often they are assessed.” The responses are bulleted below. Some responses are highlighted in bold for discussion. For ease of comparison, the results are tabulated in Table 92.

One USMC respondent replied as follows:



Promotions to E2 and E3 are "automatic" based on time in service (TIS) (i.e., time in the Marine Corps) and time in grade (TIG) (i.e., time in present grade). These Marines are evaluated semi-annually in their proficiency (PRO) and conduct (CON). Promotion to E4 and E5 is based on TIS, TIG, PRO/CON, physical fitness test score, rifle range score, education bonus points, recruiting assistance bonus points, drill instructor bonus points. These results are compiled into a composite score then monthly, based on the openings available, a cutting score is calculated based on allocations (or openings) then published.

An example to explain the cutting score is if there are 5 openings in the rank of E5 in an MOS, the cutting score for that month's promotion will be set to match the composite score of the fifth E4 on the list based on composite scores. For promotion to E6, E7, E8, and E9, annual promotion boards are held for eight to nine weeks and the Marines' records to include physical fitness, fitness reports (annual performance evaluations), professional military education, and off-duty high school, college, post-graduate education are evaluated and briefed by the board members. The best and fully qualified are selected for promotion.

Among the non USMC responses are four responses that referred to job specific or weighted criteria: in contrast to the USMC that uses the same FITREP competencies for all positions to the rank of Lieutenant General.

The literature review identified that the criteria should be responsive to the organizational strategy – which, in turn, should be responsive to internal and external influences. This understanding provided the context for question 16, “Do you believe that job descriptions and organizational design actors/structures are relatively stable?”

Table 94. Do you believe that job descriptions and organizational design factors/structures are relatively stable?

16.	Do you believe that job descriptions and organizational design factors/structure are relatively stable?	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
	Yes 	14	88%
	No 	2	13%
Total		16	100%

Most respondents replied that they operated in “relatively” stable environments. Question 17 asked, “If no, please explain why.” Three respondents replied to this question. The first two responses from non-military organizations are bulleted below:

- Rapidly changing business environments make job requirements and organizational construct to evolve repeatedly to respond to external factors and business drivers. In order to maintain a leadership position and organization must continually evolve.
- Yes for the largest parts of our business. More fluid for some areas subject to variability due to market demand and financial results.

The third respondent was a USMC manpower officer who added: “I believe that the PD [position description] are not in line with the organization's mission and, furthermore, the PD's are not current.” So, although this respondent believed that the USMC operated in a stable environment, he or she still recognized that the position descriptions were not in line with the organization’s mission, thereby being redundant in some part. Integral to the effectiveness, and efficiency, of the promotion/selection systems should be some measure of their success in achieving organizational strategies. To determine how the respondents measure their systems, Question 18 asked, “How do you measure the effectiveness of your promotion/selection systems?” Again, for comparison, the replies are tabulated below in Table 95.

The replies from the USMC indicate that there was no clear measurement of the success of their promotion/selection processes. Additionally, two respondents indicated that they were unaware of any measure of effectiveness, whatsoever. As noted in the literature review, this is one area of HRM that is often not well-established and understood by organizations. Rhetorical responses such as “Winning Wars” may well suffice for the public; however, it fails to recognize that there are many factors to success

in war; nonetheless, the advent of RMA and new war-fighting technologies. It is akin to a confectionery salesman saying that he won a local ice-cream account with a million dollar budget.

Table 95. Comparison of USMC and non USMC promotion/selection measurement processes.

Non USMC	USMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job performance</li> <li>• Very few people do not perform well in the jobs they are promoted to.</li> <li>• Extremely effective. The [U.S. Military] is the leader in the world at what we do. We do ground combat. Infantry Branch is the principle ground combat force [in] the Army.</li> <li>• Yearly [U.S. Military].</li> <li>• <b>It is a bit hit or miss</b>, some people have gotten promoted that shouldn't have and some have not that should have. <b>I would rate it at 50% effective.</b> [U.S. Military]</li> <li>• Look at vacancy rates, turnover, and employee opinion scores.</li> <li>• Don't [Foreign Military]</li> <li>• Review employee survey data, staffing data (attrition, promotion, hiring, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winning Wars.</li> <li>• The officer population is affected by the promotion process. <b>Preseps are given to possibly alleviate any incongruencies.</b> The goal is to promote the "top" Marines and not a particular MOS . . . many Marines forget that portion because of how we promote enlisted Marines.</li> <li>• <b>Nothing objective that I'm aware of</b>; we do know that organizational effectiveness is related . . . leaders that do not meet subjective standards of grade get fired/do not advance further. <b>Military is very subjective</b> . . . promotion selection boards are required to select # of 'best and most fully qualified' . . . our ability to do this AND attain MOS/grade requirements (measured by Grade Adjusted Recapitulation (GAR) report) could also be a measure of effectiveness.</li> <li>• On the enlisted side, the health of each MOS.</li> <li>• By yearly report to congress on how we did with congress law/guidelines.</li> <li>• <b>There is no measure of effectiveness.</b> The system is only designed to promote a certain percentage of the population.</li> </ul>

This analogy described above does not mean to be condescending, but simply to demonstrate that the real measure of the salesman's performance is not judged by his resources alone, but also by how he applies them. It may have been possible for him to

win three accounts with the same budget if he had applied his intellectual capital more smartly. If he wins one account, is that sufficient evidence that the selection process is optimized for performance?

The next question was intended to provide some additional discussion about preference-driven performance as discussed in chapter two. Question 19 asked, “From your experience, what percentage of a worker's motivation is derived from getting the job of their preference?” The responses are presented in Table 96.

Table 96. Comparison of USMC and non USMC answers to “What Percentage of Worker’s Motivation is derived from getting the job of their preference?”

Non USMC	USMC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very small. I believe that the ability to apply one's skills and interests are important to internal "satisfaction" but the specific job is less important.</li> <li>• Initially a high percentage, then it decreases over time and is (hopefully) replaced with new and different motivators.</li> <li>• 75% or greater [U.S. Military]</li> <li>• 75% [U.S. Military – different service to above]</li> <li>• At least 50% [U.S. Military – different service to above, again]</li> <li>• 40 - 60 % depending on the individual.</li> <li>• 80% [Civilian]</li> <li>• Not able to answer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This will vary depending on where you are at in career path-In my case, as a very senior 04, the specific job matters less than the billet location and environment. Earlier in my career, the job was about 100 percent of motivation...Marines typically want to stay in operating forces as long as they can-more so at 01-03 pay grades. Unless promoted/screen for command at 05 level, most are more focused on maintaining/improving quality of life for family, sometimes at the expense of passing up a better job (my opinion).</li> <li>• A recent survey conducted by MPP[in confidence] has revealed that duty preference is the <b>number one reason</b> for retention among our enlisted Marines. The second reason for retention is a close second: promotion equity.</li> <li>• 75%</li> <li>• 50%</li> <li>• 50%</li> <li>• MOS credibility/overseas control date/deployment.</li> </ul>



The above responses indicate that the USMC manpower officers place considerable belief in the premise that getting the “preferred job” provides a sizeable amount of the individual motivation for a worker.

This is one of the premises of two-sided matching; however, based upon TBS preferences studied in chapter two (with a proxy of tenure to the seven year mark) this did not show any salient differences across the three selection bands. The other U.S. military branches also indicated that they believed that a high percentage of motivation is derived from getting the job of one’s choice. Significantly, the multinational civilian organization believed that the percentage is “very small.”

Each time a USMC officer completes a FITREP he or she is given an opportunity to provide a preference for their next position. This creates an opportunity for further study on job preferences to determine if, over a period of time, there is any relationship between successes in job preference with performance – which may be measured by a range of different proxies.

**Teamwork.** Verbal discussion with fellow manpower students indicated that many believed that individual success is often over-rated at the expense of teamwork – which is an essential element of success in the military. For this reason, a question was designed to determine how important HR managers believed that teamwork was to success, and whether they believed organizations over-rated individual performance. The results are outlined in Table 97.




Table 97. How important is working in teams to the success of your organization?

20. How important is working in teams to the success of your organization?		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Not important		0	0%
Sometimes important		1	7%
Important		1	7%
Very important		7	47%
Critical		6	40%
 Other, Please Specify		0	0%



Five out of six of the USMC respondents rated teamwork as ‘Very Important’ or ‘Critical’. There was a strong appreciation with most respondents towards the importance of being able to work as part of a team. The next question addressed whether respondents felt that organizations failed to recognize this in their appraisal systems. Table 98 outlines the responses.

Table 98. Do you believe that organizations sometimes emphasize individual achievement in lieu of teamwork in the successful attainment of organizational goals?

21. Do you believe that organizations sometimes emphasize individual achievement in lieu of teamwork in the successful attainment of organizational goals?		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes		9	60%
No		2	13%
Sometimes		4	27%

Three USMC officers answered ‘yes’, and three answered ‘sometimes’. This does not provide any conclusive outcomes; suffice to say that there is a real perception amongst some officers that the USMC does not place enough emphasis on teamwork – to the detriment of the performance of organizational tasks.

The final part of the survey allowed officers to provide any further comments. Only two USMC officers responded. One replied that he had no observation with “organizations in general”, and the other responded, “Our goal is to put the right Marine with the right skill at the right time and place into to right billet” – which is a very well-worn adage of the USMC HRM personnel. These two responses may provide part of the answer to lack of flexibility in the HRM process.

## E. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Thomas H. Davenport’s article “Putting the Enterprise into the Enterprise System” discusses the high failure rate of enterprise (also known as Enterprise Resource Planning) systems at many otherwise successful firms, proposing the idea that such systems “impose their own logic on companies’ strategies, organization, and culture – often forcing firms to do business in ways that conflict with their best interest” (1998, 4-5). Davenport also argues that in a lot of situations it may not be possible for an

organization to maintain the culture that gives it a competitive advantage, while at the same time attempting to homogenize some of its idiosyncratic practices in an enterprise system.

The USMC has a strong homogeneous culture, and homogenized HRM practices. Therein lies twice the challenge. An oft quoted adage is, “Why fix something if it ‘aint broke” belies a certain reluctance to institutional change. Although this reluctance to change has a few benefits such as giving off perceptions of being fair and equitable – it will cause the USMC to be less adaptable to a changing environment. Military services can be very eccentric cultural organizations – especially relative to other government organizations and non-military enterprises. The military has long embedded histories and traditions and; therefore, can be very slow and hesitant to change. We must also remember that, “Businesses will not fight wars” (Verco, 2003). But this does not preclude the military from being challenged by contemporary processes that may improve the military system. A deep-seated reluctance, or rejection, of new processes can sometimes hinder progress.

Change can be implemented as ‘structural’ change (change the physical structure of the organization) or ‘transformational’ change (change the processes only). Transformational change, in general, is cheaper to implement; however, it can sometimes come against deeply embedded cultural patterns or ways of doing business. The USMC FITREP process is mostly unchanged for the past 80 years. This survey, however limited in sample size, nonetheless highlights some significant differences between the USMC and other organizations in understanding the HRM processes for performance appraisal, and warrants further discussion in context of the USMC organizational strategy.

Although the USMC, like most governmental organizations, must give off the perception of having fair and equitable HRM methods, the USMC may still be able to gain insight in improving their HRM methods through exploring other organizational methods. This survey attempted to explore and provide some comparison with non USMC HRM methods, and to provide support for the literature discussion on contemporary HRM practices. Finally, this survey attempted to identify different HRM methods of selection that may be more useful in the more complex environment of today.

It is recommended that the USMC human resource development planners consider the worthiness of a clearly defined articulation of the USMC competencies into the strategic plan. Additionally, the survey validates previous observations that the FITREP competencies are more or less important to success across MOS and ranks and, therefore, warrant further cross-sectional analysis in order to provide stronger validity for the promotion and assignment process.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

### **A. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

NPS has a study in progress developing a multi-criteria, two-sided matching, decision support system for personnel assignment that will provide more effective and efficient assignments resulting in more satisfied personnel, stronger capability for defense, and increased savings. The multi-criteria decision support system relies on weighted criteria to optimize the possible combinations. To this end, defining the weights to be attributed to the varied criteria will require considerable analysis in order to, firstly, define those criteria to be implemented and, secondly, weight them according to their reliability and validity.

Two-sided matching is partly premised upon the claim that some part of job fulfillment, and therefore performance, is derived from the worker receiving the job of their preference. To date, no analysis had been conducted on this premise. A study of TBS preferences using a proxy for performance (through job retention to the seven year mark) demonstrated little difference in the probability of retention of USMC officers according to TBS preferences and assignment (refer Figure 22).

Additionally, it was found that the officers who graduated in the top sixth – and who received their first preference – had a lower probability of retention than those in the second sixth who did not receive their preference.

This indicated that the top sixth viewed a career outside the USMC as providing them with comparative advantage, whether that was measured in pecuniary rewards, quality of life, or some other criteria. Also, it demonstrated that those who were motivated to complete TBS in good standing were still attracted to a career with the USMC - even though they did not receive their preferred MOS.

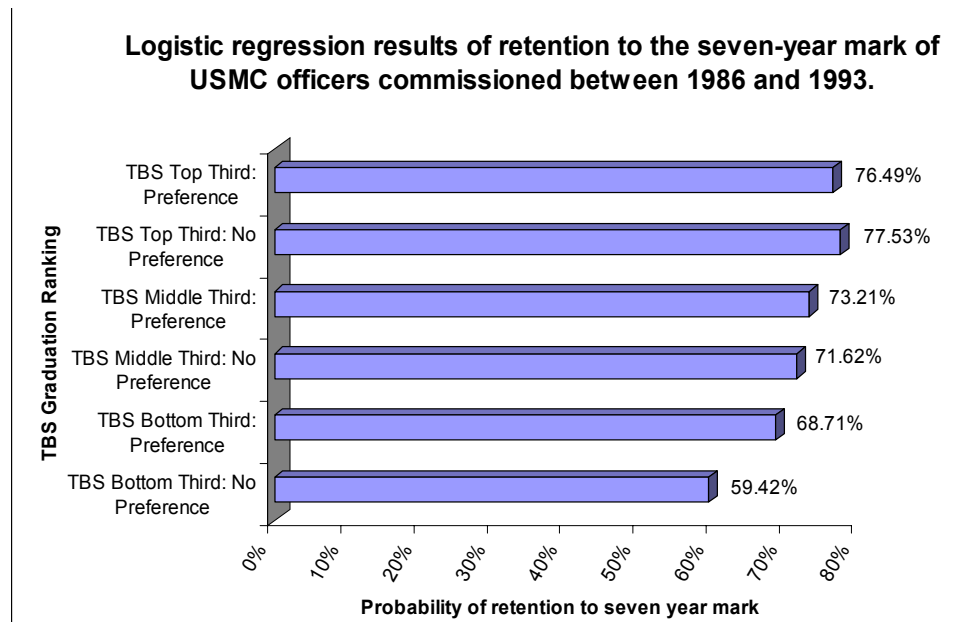


Figure 22. Graph of TBS preference and retention to the seven year mark

A quantitative analysis of the USMC FITREP competencies identified statistically significant differences in the scores of FITREP competencies across MOS and rank – supporting the hypothesis that the competencies were more or less important to success across each MOS and rank. Performance characteristics (as reported by the USMC FITREP) for USMC jobs vary throughout the chain of command and across services and categories; however, there is no recognition of this in the USMC promotion/assignment process. Previous studies also identified up to 0.49 correlation across similar appraisal systems which suggests that the FITREP attributes are also likely to have high correlation which diminishes their utility in determining the best predictors for success. Factor analysis is recommended in order to identify those competencies that have the least correlation with each other, but also provide some level of prediction for success.

Reporting creep continues in all FITREP competencies. Figure 23 demonstrates the continued reporting creep. If this continues, then eventually the utility of the FITREP to demarcate more successful USMC officers will diminish.

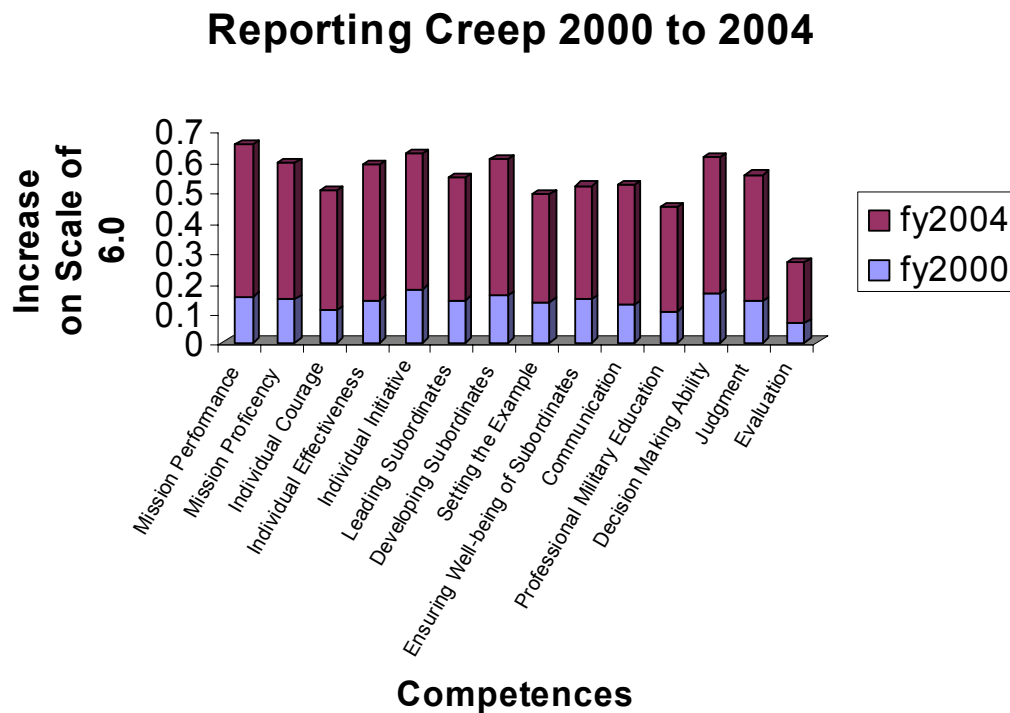


Figure 23. Reporting creep in FITREP scores 2000 - 2004

Throughout the entire methodology is an analysis of the USMC Human Resource Management (HRM) that provides comparison with contemporary HRM processes. For this reason, two web-based surveys were also conducted. The first survey with USMC officers at NPS provided them an opportunity to assess the USMC promotion/assignment processes and relative value of FITREP attributes. This survey provided evidence that USMC officers do not view the FITREP competencies as equally important in bringing success to a particular MOS or rank.

This is in contrast to the way that the USMC “averages the attributes” in order to assign a performance index to the officer. This process attributes an equal contribution to success for each competency. Combine this averaging process with the correlation that exists across competencies – and there is little utility left in the appraisal for correctly identifying suitable matches across MOS and rank.

Analyzing the responses by MOS identified the following competencies (in order of importance) as most important to bringing success to their job:

1. Mission Performance
2. Mission Proficiency
3. Decision-making Ability

Breaking down the responses into rank identified only a slight variation on the above responses:

1. Mission Performance
2. Mission Proficiency
3. Leading Subordinates
- 3<sup>rd</sup> equal. Decision-making Ability

Previous studies of similar appraisal systems revealed considerable correlation (and intercorrelation) across the competencies that detract from their ability to provide validity as predictors of success.

The second survey was provided for non-military organizations so that a comparison could be made between the USMC HRM processes and contemporary HRM practices. The following outcomes were observed:

- There are some differences between the USMC promotion/assignment processes and contemporary HRM practices.
- 50% of the USMC manpower officers surveyed believed that there should be some matching of competencies to the specific MOS. This may occur informally; however, there is no doctrinal guidance on how this is to be implemented.
- There is no articulated measure of the effectiveness of the FITREP competencies.

Withal, the study identified potential for a review of the promotion/assignment processes and implementation in order to further clarify and strengthen the articulation and linkage of the USMC HRM plan into the USMC strategy.

## **B. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE STUDY**

The following recommendations have been drawn from this study. These are described as potential future studies:

### **1. Inflation Analysis**

This study only compared the FITREP scores of the new FITREP introduced in 1998. During the last five years the scores of most competencies have inflated between 0.4 - 0.5 on a scale of 6. Currently, the average score ranges from 4.0 – 5.0 for Captain to Lieutenant Colonel. This trend indicates that if it is allowed to continue, most field officers will report as outstanding on every attribute within the next 10 – 15 years. This does not allow the organization to identify the better performing officers for advancement within the organization.

### **2. Survival Analysis**

Cox Hazard regression models should be developed using cross-sectional analysis to determine which of the FITREP competencies are most useful for prediction of success. The proxy for success could be a number of options such as promotion to O6, service to 20 years, or even unit command appointment.

### **3. Factor Analysis**

In conjunction with the survival analysis, varimax solutions could provide a pool of competencies that provide the least correlation and therefore some indication of which competencies are most closely associated with success.

### **4. Articulation of Attributes**

The expansion and linkage of the FITREP attributes into the USMC strategy needs to be developed. At the moment, the USMC FITREP attributes remain isolated from the USMC HRDP.

### **5. Human Resource Management Plan**

As identified in the previous sub-paragraph, the USMC could ensure that as they further develop their HRDP that they meet and articulate the requirements of



contemporary HRM practices that recognize the interdependency of appraisal competencies with the strategic goals of the organization.

### **C. APPLICATION**

The USMC is currently a stakeholder in world affairs. The U.S., as a hegemony, and influencer of world affairs, remains under the international spotlight. The USMC delivers the power for this continued influence. The external environment is changing rapidly, and the USMC's strategy with it. To meet these rapidly changing requirements the USMC should appraise its HRM plan to ensure that it provides the best promotion/assignment practices - guaranteeing the appointment of its smartest officers to lead the corps into this very complex and sophisticated 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This study has provided a foundation for future analysis on the usefulness of a generic appraisal report that is not articulated into the strategic goals of the organization. It has also provided some additional discussion on the value, methodology, and efficacy of weighted performance criteria, as well as highlighted some of the challenges and limitations in determining weights for the multi-criteria, two-sided matching, decision support system with respect to the personnel promotion and assignment processes in the USMC.

## APPENDIX A. RESPONSE TO QUESTION 18

**Question 18. In your opinion, do you believe that some assignments and/or promotions are influenced by some form of favoritism such as nepotism or the "old boys network"? If yes, please explain why you think this occurs.**

- 1 I believe that some assignments are influenced by favoritism - specifically if who ever is making the decision on a billet assignment makes the decision based on personal knowledge of the Marines being nominated, or takes the opinions of others, rather than based on objective comparison of capabilities/performance/etc.
- 2 I won't characterize it as negative, but obviously if someone on a promotion board or a monitor has served with a Marine in a previous billet, they have more data inputs with which to evaluate someone. No fitrep will ever be able to replace that. Is that bad / fair? It depends on how that special knowledge is applied (i.e. for the good of the Corps or in serving some self interest).
- 3 I felt like it was due to reverse racism. The good old boy network consisted of African-Americans which favored minorities.
- 4 I think the monitors "hook" up their buddies. With regards to the good 'ol boys network, this clearly occurs when the fitreps are written. The boss has his boys; it's good when you're one of them and it's bad when you're not. It all depends on the command's integrity on how fair their fitness reports will be. I think the promotion boards are as fair as can be expected. The input they receive (fitreps) is not what it should be.
- 5 Because I am naive and faithful in the fact that Marines have integrity. But, I do believe that the command slating process is broken... basically, no matter how inept you may be at your PMOS, if you've had command of an RS, you will get command of a battalion/squadron. It's wrong to have someone who's not tactically and technically proficient at their MOS given command. That's why I marked proficiency so high.
- 6 Absolutely...but I don't think that it is necessarily a bad thing when it is performance-based, i.e., COs trying to bring proven/trusted subordinate officers into the unit during his command.
- 7 I do not concur with the wording of some and believe it will result in more yes votes than is appropriate. It is too general. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is through favoritism who the SecDef believes in. This permeates throughout the ranks. You are allowed to command based on the confidence others have in you. You gain confidence not through what is written on a piece of paper but by having worked together. The procedures are fair.
- 8 Especially in terms of assignments, if an officer is interested in obtaining a highly competitive assignment, who he knows can be much more important than what he knows in order to get that billet.
- 9 I have seen it occur on more than one occasion.
- 10 As a female officer, I see some senior male officers look unfavorably on female officers. I feel as if I am marked lower just because of my sex.

- 11 A certain level of nepotism has always existed within the Marine Corps. Our monitors are people just like us, but they are aware of their great influence on our careers. It is better to be labeled "flexible" and "cool" by your assignment monitor vice "arrogant" and "demanding." If you anger your monitor, standby for an unpleasant duty station assignment.
- 12 Those that speak up get their way. Those that try and let the system work get what's left over.
- 13 While a majority of the Marine Corps does not practice this I have seen first hand this happen.
- 14 I believe that those with the 'good old boys network' setup will more that likely have a better chance at choice duty stations vs someone that does not have this network of their own set up.
- 15 Don't know why, only know that about half of the individuals receiving commands are horrible leaders, but showed extreme proficiency as combat aviators. Too many Squadron commanders were/are more concerned with their own well being and do not care who gets stomped on in the lower ranks. I personally know of more than one CO who were more concerned with how many times they could commit adultery vice taking care of the Marines below them. Of course, all of these individuals are quite capable pilots and that is why they received glowing fitreps throughout their careers.
- 16 Why, because I have seen Marines promoted, when they should have never been promoted.
- 17 I have seen at least in one occasion where some one less qualified has been given an assignment due to favoritism.
- 18 More often than not it seems to be about who you know and where they are
- 19 I am critical of the idea that either off duty education or NPS/DLI should be seen as a negative step in the Corps. All other services promote it and in some cases require it for advancement. This unnecessarily adds to the myth that Marines are not brightest service.
- 20 It's impossible to remove "personality" from a person-based system. The sooner we realize that, the better.
- 21 I've seen incompetent officers who were related to General officers get assigned to "special billets" that otherwise would not be open otherwise. Example, I saw a tank officer Lt get assigned as the MMO for an infantry battalion because he wanted to go on a MEU.
- 22 Perhaps - If the monitor has to place Marine Officers he/she would consider as a friend or buddy - then preferential treatment towards friends or buddies may influence where the monitor may assign them. I don not think this applies for promotion, only assignments.
- 23 Command Boards- I have seen borderline "competent" O-4/5s selected as COs and highly competent field grade passed over. The only thing I can contribute this too is an insufficient evaluation (unlikely) or patronage (more likely).
- 24 Traditions take time to change. Favoritism has been a part of a system that forces leaders to choose early whom they will groom for leadership billets, and it is evident still today. It is getting better, but it is still evident.

25 But to a great extent and not unique to the Marine Corps. This fact is inherent in  
most organizations. Don't agree with tone of question and inclusion of "old boys  
network"...

26 With respect to assignments, yes, in the fact that finding out about open  
assignments sometimes comes down to who you know.

27 I'm sure it does, but I have not specific examples to illustrate.

28 This pervades every level of rank and hierarchy. I have seen it during formal  
inspections and assignments by monitors (monitor and subject Marine were in the  
same unit). Marines are creatures of habit and as such, we feel a certain level of  
comfort by surrounding ourselves with those whom we feel no friction.

29 If this occurs, I am not aware of it. I believe that I have always gotten what I  
deserved and was qualified for.

30 An old boy's network is present in virtually all institutions. We are in a people  
business. If you know me and I vouch for someone, that will hold more weight  
than any objective impersonal evaluation.

31 Monitors seem to be more willing to accommodate "friends".

32 I believe this was true in the past but much of that is gone now.

33 Marines know who they can help advance through the chain of command. It's not  
always a bad thing to help the good performers along. Sadly, poor officers and  
those individuals that fool unsuspecting superior officers often advance as well.

34 mostly not because of the board but rather by the writer of the fitrep. The "boys"  
who follow them often get marked higher than those who show the moral courage  
to do what is right for the mission, marines and command...not just following  
blindly a RS who may not be on mark.

35 I don't think this happens too frequently, but seniors do look after favorite juniors.  
Political leaders also can influence on behalf of someone they like as well.

36 If I went to TBS with someone or if we spent some fleet time together where we  
bonded (bonding is the key), it is assumed that if my buddy was assigned as my  
monitor, he/she would "look-out" or "take-care" of me.

37 Assignments: If you know a Monitor, you are more likely to get preferred  
treatment. Also, basic favoritism is often displayed in fitreps. Talk like the boss,  
dress like the boss, act like the boss, and the boss is going to rate you well.

38 I believe officers serving in units outside their MOS (i.e. staff officers) are at a  
disadvantage versus their peers who are in the same unit, but are the MOS of that  
unit (i.e. armor officers in a tank battalion). I think those officers writing the fitrep  
are inherently more fluent in what it takes to be a good armor (or other MOS)  
officer, whereas they are less fluent in what it takes to be a good logistics,  
communications, supply, etc officer. While those writing the reports understand  
when something does not work (i.e. comm is down), I don't think they understand  
the intricacies of what it takes for these officers to succeed. This puts these select  
officers at a disadvantage versus their peers.

39 Good Marines are often passed for promotion because there is no one on the  
board who is looking out for them, the converse is true as well.

40 Some officers have familiarity with assignment personnel either through personal  
or professional relationships. This familiarity creates more open communication

to provide the officer the assignment that he desires. In this respect there is a bias that is created in having familiarity with an officer and just knowing about them from the data on a piece of paper. The former relationship gives the officer a better chance of obtaining his desired assignment.

41 personality "chemistry" between superior/subordinate

42 Command Screening heavily involves the opinions of general officers. They obviously will have stronger opinions of individuals they have personally worked with. This is an unavoidable fallibility in the assignment process.

43 Because I have seen it. If you know someone, you can follow them up the ranks. Then, they take care of you.

44 General's son's who have had preference in assignments. Conway and Zinni off the top of my head.

45 UNAVOIDABLE

46 Some billets are filled by nepotism or the old boy net work. I believe promotions at the rank of Col and above are also influenced in some way by the old boy network.

47 Among aviators, personalities or cockpit skills often trump performance of ground duties and professional behavior usually associated with Marine officers such as maturity and setting the example for subordinates. This could be described as an "old boys network" of sorts, though I believe it is usually reflective of an aviator's ability in the cockpit, which is relevant to performance and advancement. It's not necessarily bad or good, nor do I think it is so egregious as to unfairly affect promotions, but it is under the surface when it comes to ranking Marines and sometimes assignment to squadrons. Squadrons are more apt to go after an aircrew with a reputation for being fun on deployment than a quite guy who solidly does his job, provided both are adequately competent in the cockpit.

48 I don't make this as a bitter remark, as a matter of fact, I may have benefited from it in the past. I was a General's aide for about a year, serving under two different Generals, thereby receiving two GO-level FITREPS. After my time as an aide, I got to pick, within rather liberal limits, my next assignment. I was also told, time and again, by senior officers, that having two favorable GO-level FITREPS on my record were very good for me.

49 simply majority rules and if you are part of the majority, you really have no reason to consider anything different than your idea of the "norm".

50 This does not occur at my level. The Marine Corps is a personal business. Seniors will pick people they know for certain billets. It makes sense to do this, for ex. if I had to choose between to Marines that were equal on paper, but personally I knew one of them to be outstanding. Then I would choose that Marine. Additionally if I have worked with someone in the past before and they were great, it would make sense to work with that person again.

51 possible. WRT how I answered the previous questions, the traits that I thought you could be promoted without (due to not being in a combat billet and showing them) is why I marked them lower--hope I didn't mess up your survey

52 Politics plays an increasing role (Especially the Officer side) as you ascend  
through the rank structure.

53 Absolutely!!! So many CO's get by on their network of supporters instead of their  
merits as leaders.

54 Not necessarily for Company Grade Officers, but once you reach Field Grade and  
above, I believe your promotions/command assignments depend on who knows  
you and the reputation in the community. Why do I think this? Because I've  
spoken to 0-6 level officers who sat on the promotion/command slate boards and  
openly admitted how "things" work.

55 Yes. I know of officers that have been on command slate boards (and promotion  
boards), and I believe they have 'hooked up' officers who have worked with them  
in the past. I believe that those aides who work for generals are also given their  
assignment preference over others. And I think that assignment to the MEU's and  
MSG duty (XO), are based a lot on who you know.

56 I simply feel that knowing a key monitor well will assist you in getting a coveted  
billet. But so will serving successfully as a CG's aide, based on my observations.  
This is sometimes a reward for a "tough" assignment. The prior is more of the  
GOB network at it's best.

57 That being said, it doesn't 'hurt' to know or have someone know you who serves  
on the board. These instances are few and far between as far as I'm concerned.

58 In the past, I believe there was a "good ol'boys" network in the MP officer corps. I  
competency this to the fact that many MP officers were LDO officers who  
progressed through the Warrant Officer ranks. The problem with this is that MP  
officers were not cultivated as MAGTF officers like the rest of the Marine Corps.  
Past MP officers were garrison law enforcement (LE)oriented and tended to shy  
away from MAGTF operations. As a result, a network of MP officers emerged  
which shaped the field to emphasize on being a "cop" and shielded the MOS from  
being relevant to the MAGTF. There are a few remnants of these officers in the  
Corps and more on the verge of retiring. Mid-grade and new MP officers are  
MAGTF-centric and their views and background may clash with the more  
seasoned and senior LDO MP officer who is garrison LE-centric.

59 I think this occurs because 1stSgts and Sgt'sMajors want to have an influence on  
assignments and retention beyond advising a commander in his recommendation.  
Everyone has things that they consider to be better indicators of performance than  
the FitRep and some use their weight to screen packages (even before they get to  
a board) and have them get "lost" or redirected.

60 Assignments and special tactical training have gone to the more charismatic vice  
the more qualified/capable officers. This in turn elevates the ranking of the more  
trained individual over his potentially better qualified peers.

61 This is human nature. We can make every attempt to be unbiased, but I think the  
subconscious plays a role in everything we do, including recommendations,  
promotions, etc.

62 Because we are human, we all are bias one way or another. We, humans, tend to  
favor those who are like us. Another reason it occurs is because we assume things.  
(i.e. I heard a Group CO comment that over anything else, his new S-3 had to

- have been a squadron S-3) The assumption is that he would do a better job than anyone else.
- 63 It's not what you know, it's who you know. Although, I believe most of the time it's fair.
- 64 The Marine Corps is small. Despite a professional effort to be objective, a person who is "known quantity" is regarded differently than a person who is known only on paper.
- 65 I was a monitor. There were several occasions when a senior officer called the monitor to influence someone's assignment. More often than not, these calls were successful. Your chances of promotion are greatly increased IF someone on the board knows you and thinks highly of you.
- 66 It's unavoidable in an organization as small as the Marine Corps. Someone on the promotion board will know one or more of the candidates and will "sponsor" those Marines.

## APPENDIX B. RESPONSE TO QUESTION 19

**Question 19. Do you believe that USMC officer's skills are required to change as they progress through the ranks? If yes, please explain why.**

- 1 The maturation process and learning should increase the individual's effectiveness. If their skills remained the same, there would be no "progress through the ranks."
- 2 At the junior officer level, officers need to be technically proficient (specifically knowing such things as how to do transactions, etc.). As they get higher in rank, they need better communication and managerial skills, and less technical specific skills. They should maintain a sound technical understanding, but not necessarily how to do everything. A requirement for understanding the "big picture" is needed as they get higher in rank.
- 3 Yes. Experience should add to a leader's skills as he progresses.
- 4 Definitely, as officers progress through the ranks their skills become less technical and more leadership focused.
- 5 Early in your career more hands-on "tactical" knowledge is required whereas senior officers are more involved in the development of plans, procedures, policies and leadership of larger organizations.
- 6 As you start as a junior officer/SNCO you grow in technical skills; up to a point (Major/GySgt). From the point those individuals need to realign their focus of effort on obtaining knowledge beyond his/her technical skills (i.e. management, how the Corps gets/funds units - exercises, training). I don't feel the Corps gives adequate credence to teaching junior SNCO's/Officer's with current PME. I know we are in the warfighting business...we are also in the people/organization management business too.
- 7 as you assume different jobs/tasks, you must call upon different skills. i.e.; an infantry platoon commander uses different skills than an infantry company XO
- 8 As an officer progresses, he/she must be able to manage and lead in increasingly more complicated situations. In aviation, a "good pilot" (stick and rudder skills) is not always a good mission leader, staff officer, maintenance officer or squadron CO. Often unsophisticated officers get promoted into positions they are unqualified for, but this is the way of the whole world.
- 9 Someone who has spent eight to ten years in their PMOS should be an expert at that job. However, when a major walks into a room, I believe there is an expectation that he or she has been exposed to a lot more than just their PMOS. As Marines progress in their careers, they should have a better understanding of the entire MAGTF and how interdependent it is, rather than simply being a flag waver for his or her MOS / community.
- 10 I believe this to be true because, as an officer progresses, his responsibilities require him to possess an even greater knowledge of other Warfighting Functions, as well as how to operate in the Joint environment (at various levels).
- 11 This question does not deserve explanatory justification.



- 12 There is a development that must take place as an officer gains experience. Much  
more is expected of a LtCol than of a lieutenant--understandably so. There is also  
a significant difference between officers filling command positions and those  
filling staff ones. Both of these jobs require somewhat different skills and focuses.
- 13 Dumb question. Of course skills must change. I wouldn't want a battalion  
commander with the skill set of a 2ndLt.
- 14 Must become more a manager than a technical expert.
- 15 With added responsibility comes new demands and those demands require  
maturity.
- 16 Must developed the ability to interact at the staff level, and accomplish tasks that  
require input/cooperation from sections outside of your immediate control.
- 17 Skills must change over time as you progress through the ranks. The higher your  
rank, the broader your management strategy must be.
- 18 Communication skills and decision making must become much more acute than  
that of younger officers.
- 19 But you are expected to improve on upon those skills. So basically more is  
expected to receive the same FITREP marks as you progress in rank.
- 20 Knowledge, skill level, performance etc are required to develop and change as  
rank progresses. I have worked for and never wish to work again for a Captain  
who knew no more than the 2ndLt he should have been developing!
- 21 On the company grade level a higher importance is placed on technical profanely,  
but as one progresses his personable skills and ability to utilize those in his  
command can make up for a lack of technical skills.
- 22 Experience with rank is a virtue that you would hope to see in any officer. If a  
Major is still performing skills with the proficiency of a 2nd LT then a problem  
has occurred somewhere in the training cycle.
- 23 level and scope of responsibility change over time, and therefore the skills must  
change to compensate.
- 24 Not in the aviation community. If you are a good pilot, then you are a good pilot.  
You can suck in your ground job for 15 years and still get promoted with no  
problem.
- 25 With each promotion and billet officer's will need to adjust to these by using new  
skills.
- 26 Progression in rank is an evolution that changes attitudes and understanding of  
diverse subjects. As such skills should change in order to provide the individual  
with the tools necessary to perform at the level that is expected.
- 27 With extra rank comes extra responsibility and one must be able to meet those  
challenges. If his skills don't progress past the 2ndLt level, he will fail.
- 28 The perspective of the officer must change as he/she progresses though the ranks,  
communications skills, technical competence, management scope, and leadership  
style must also adapt to the change in perspective.
- 29 Commanding a platoon and commanding a Battalion are different even though the  
basic tenets are the same. Likewise, being primary staff at a Bn/Squadron or  
Regiment/Group (S-Level) is very different from the Division/FSSG/MAW (G-  
Level).

- 30 The answer is quite clear. How can anyone believe this to not to be the case?
- 31 Obviously, officers have to be able to perform a larger number and variety of tasks as they progress through the ranks. This is NOT dependent on MOS -- the best officers care enough to be proficient in everything they do, regardless of their MOS. The worst example an officer can set is to act like certain tasks don't matter or are beneath him or her.
- 32 A new Marine Officer is primarily focused upon success at the tactical level. As that Officer progresses through the ranks, they become more focused upon the operational and then the strategic level of war. Beyond the level of war, seniority brings more responsibility and higher level considerations. In my MOS, a 2ndLt may be mostly consumed with a Radio-based communication architecture and a Battalion Commander's COC. A Major may be concerned with a MEU's communication architecture. As a LtCol, the focus may be upon providing communication for a MSC or even a MEF. Clearly, the skill set and understanding of how to function within a Commander's Staff grows over time.
- 33 Yes. Company grade officers are executors...they deal mostly with enlisted men and must communicate plans into tasks and motivate performance. Field grade officers seem to deal more with planning and interact with officers more than enlisted men requiring a more "political" approach.
- 34 As we grow in rank, so should our focus from the technical and "1st Level" leadership and management focus to the broader perspectives of mid-level managing and operations.
- 35 Yes. Billet requirements change at each level. New skills must be acquired to be effective.
- 36 For a helicopter pilot, for example, the primary skills required are to fly the aircraft safely and make sound tactical decisions. 90% of our fitrep, however, is based on how well we do our desk job. so- a pilot may be an outstanding paper shuffler, but a poor aviator- and his evaluation will still reflect outstanding marks, for the most part.
- 37 Obviously. Everyone will mature and learn as they go through their experiences. If they don't they won't be very successful or will be out of the Corps.
- 38 Initially, officers learn their job and as time progresses, they perform their job and eventually re-structure the way to do their job. For each one of these things to be achieved, officers must gain skills, hone others and eventually get to the point where they make decisions for the greater good of the service.
- 39 I think as we progress from Company Grade to Field Grade, there is a change in the technical proficiency aspect. It comes down to more about knowing what to do with what you have and how to best support and lead your unit. As we get promoted, we progress from small unit leadership to larger leadership responsibilities, as well as overall job performance expectations and responsibilities. Things tend to get broader in scope as we progress.
- 40 We are required to learn different jobs everywhere we are stationed. One place we may be the "airspace officer" the next duty station you may be required to become a "plans officer." Each of which required a different set of skills and knowledge.

41 I assume you mean required to change out of necessity. My answer is yes because  
 if you don't change/improve, you will be less effective as you progress through  
 the ranks.

42 As one climbs the rank ladder, one needs to be able to see the bigger picture, yet  
 still "remember where he came from" since every decision comes down to the  
 "hurry up and wait" factor for that PFC who has no idea why he is doing  
 something for the 5th time.

43 One example I can cite is in the area of "Judgment" on the FITREP. As a  
 Battalion Adjutant in my first assignment, I was closely supervised by the  
 Battalion XO. Any lapses in my judgment (as a 2ndLt) would have quickly been  
 identified by him (a Major). So, I submit that in this area, greater judgment "skill"  
 is required of the Major than the 2ndLt.

44 Marines need to progress through the levels of war. A Platoon Commander,  
 Company Commander, and even Battalion Ops Officer need only be concerned  
 with the tactical level. Regimental and Division staff and commanders need to  
 understand the operational level, and MEF and above need to understand the  
 strategic level. In addition, as you rise in rank your scope broadens. A 2ndLt  
 in the infantry has three rifle squads. A Captain has three rifle platoons plus a  
 weapons platoon. A Major Opso has three rifle companies, three or four semi-  
 independent weapons company platoons, plus a staff to manage.

45 Most definitely. As a MO progresses, his/her level of responsibility and  
 accountability also increase and so his/her skills most also change.

46 Responsibilities change. Different skill sets are required to meet the challenges of  
 increased responsibilities. Moreover, a Marines' ability to broaden skills is  
 imperative--through education, technical expertise, additional experience, etc.

47 you must continually improve in leadership, and proficiency in your MOS  
 otherwise you are no use, just filling space.

48 They become more "political" the higher rank you achieve.

49 As an officer process in his/her career, they should always seek improvement.

50 As one becomes more senior, the tactical and technical skills are not as important  
 as the operational and managerial skills.

51 As you move higher in rank, you are required to obtain and exercise broader (less  
 MOS specific) skills.

52 I think overall technical proficiency, the ability to manage large numbers of assets  
 and personnel, must increase as time in the Marine Corps increases. The basics of  
 what is important at a junior rank still apply, but the responsibilities and  
 expectations of a senior officer mean his or her skill in MOS and leadership must  
 increase as well.

53 Officer need to migrate from small unit leaders and tactical experts to become  
 mentors, managers and able to function at the operational level.

54 I think that for my MOS specifically there must be an increase in the "big picture"  
 view of operations and how actions will affect the future. There is a movement  
 from actually being involved in operations, to managing those that are involved  
 and focusing on problem identification and resolution.

55 operational > strategic thinking

56 Larger groups of subordinates require larger skill sets.  
57 It is more important to become a critical thinker as you progress. Early in the  
ranks, success is characterized by critical doers.  
58 Absolutely, the Marine Corps is too small to only have one skill set. A Marine  
officer is required to perform many different functions which requires them to  
learn new skills as they go.  
59 As you progress through the ranks, your views toward the operation of  
organizations change focus from tactical type thinking to strategic type thinking.  
This requires skills to change, i.e.: comm officers need to start thinking in terms  
of how they can increase the effectiveness of operations rather than providing  
services based on what equipment they are provided.  
60 COMMUNICATION SKILLS MUST ADVANCE  
61 As an officer becomes more senior the way leadership is exercised changes  
somewhat. By this I refer to the ability to have others accomplish assigned tasks  
in a successful manner. this is not to say that the definition used in the fitrep  
should change - it is understood.  
62 Junior aviators are rarely required to deal with enlisted issues unless they are one  
of a few officers assigned to maintenance, unlike our ground counterparts.  
Therefore, writing evaluations and developing subordinates are skills not truly  
practiced until field grade rank. Also, as officers are promoted to senior ranks,  
their understanding of issues beyond their PMOS becomes much more critical.  
63 This is reflected on the FITREP itself. When a Marine is rated on performance  
and proficiency, that rating should reflect their time in grade, time in MOS, and  
time in billet. Additionally, I believe that an officer's overall focus should change  
as he or she progresses throughout the rank. As a lieutenant, an officer should  
focus not only on general leadership, but also on technical proficiency within their  
MOS, gaining "MOS credibility." As they progress through the ranks, their focus  
should become more operational an encompass a wider view of things.  
64 It goes beyond the scope of rank. We should constantly strive to improve  
ourselves. I do not limit myself by rank.  
65 absolutely. Power point and computer skills are essential (unfortunately)  
66 It is a considerable change to go from leading the troops to leading other Officers.  
Too frequently a failure to understand this transition results in micromanagement  
of the jr officers and weakening of morale within the entire unit. Some better  
management skills or classes to help cope with this transition would be good tools  
to have.  
67 Most of the physical aspect of leadership pretty much goes away after the rank of  
major, replaced by more intellectual components of leadership. I think a guy  
could be the best lieutenant in the world but be a terrible LtCol. Being an O5 and  
above is more like being a chess player.  
68 Generally, I think that Marine Officer skills adjust to meet the demands of new  
promotions except in technical MOSs (0602). In technical MOSs, an unrestricted  
line officer cannot afford to be a "generalist". With tele/data communications  
technology exploding and increasing demands for a "Digitized Battlespace" down  
to the lowest Rifleman, 0602s and the mission cannot survive with someone who

knows "a little about a whole lot". Some will tell you that we have Warrant Officers and SNCOs to be the duty experts in our technical fields, but having served as the I MEF Data Officer during OIF, you cannot make sound decisions on complicated technical issues without an in depth understanding of the subject.

69 I believe they are required to change. As you enter the Marine Corps your focus is on your job, but as you progress, you need to gain knowledge about other fields in order to understand the bigger picture and how you fit within it. I believe it is each persons responsibility to ensure that they guide and mentor those below them and assist them in garnering these skills. We tend to do this for the enlisted personnel, but senior officers FAIL to shape and mold the officers junior to them.

70 of course

71 I believe that as we progress forward/upward, we become more diplomatic and learn to work well with others. If you don't play nice with others as a Lieutenant, no big deal. If you do the same as a Capt/Maj or above, you chance angering someone who may be able to influence your assignment later in life. It's a small Corps already, but it gets smaller when you get closer to the top.

72 Officer's should become more well-rounded as they progress through the ranks. I think the Marine Corps does that well.

73 Skills are required to improve and the tolerance for not being competent should decrease as a Marine goes up the rank structure. There are too many Marines just filling the quota for rank and have very little to offer. I can only speak from personal experience in my MOS.

74 Obviously, they should become boarder and oriented towards MAGTF operations at higher levels.

75 As you go through the ranks, you are expected to make fewer mistakes. You must possess solid communication skills and the ability to reason and make solid judgments. These things are important at junior levels, however they become crucial at higher ranks.

76 Officers must acquire new skills as different responsibilities tied to higher rank are placed upon them.

77 As officers progress, technical skills become irrelevant, but communication and developing subordinates become more relevant. A commander expects the adjutant to "know" everything, and a 2ndlt does not "know" everything upon reporting to his/her first command.

78 Skill sets may be the same, but they become more involved in some areas and less so in others. Also, skill sets are dependant on the billet and not necessarily on the rank. i.e. a platoon commander's ability to lead subordinates should be more heavily weighted than a staff officers. While a staff officer needs to be more versed in communication skills.

79 Skills should change as a part of a maturation process. Also, the farther up you go in rank, the more you need to be able to lead, vice doing.

80 The higher the rank, the deeper the knowledge of cultures, geopolitical conflicts, technology, and regional economics plays in the decision making at the tactical, operational, and theater levels.

- 81 The basic skills of being a Marine officer do not change. However, there is a significant difference between the additional skills a major needs and the skills a 2nd lieutenant needs. Skills need to be widened and depend as an officer becomes more senior. I.e. Instead of looking at how a platoon or division is successful, a senior officer must have the additional skills to know how to make a battalion or squadron successful.
- 82 Marine officers must learn and implement critical management skills as they progress through the ranks.
- 83 As we gain rank, we often start to think more about our own needs and ambitions and forget about the needs of those we serve over. Ensuring your Marines have the tools to perform is more important than just telling them to do so.
- 84 Increased rank and experience provide for more responsibility.
- 85 The basic capabilities remain the same, but an officer must have the ability to mature and progress. For example, some officers may stagnate in their professional development and education; they get left behind.
- 86 Progression thru the ranks indicates a different audience, a different decision making body, a different set of subordinates.
- 87 With time in service comes wisdom and skills that permit officers to continue finding success in their jobs, relationships, and missions.
- 88 An officer is required to think more on an intellectual level as he/ she progresses. Qualities that make a leader an outstanding platoon commander may have little benefit as a Regimental Staff Officer.
- 89 In my MOS (0602), an officer becomes less of a technician and more of a manager as he/she increases in rank.
- 90 Communication skills and leadership become even more relevant and important as the officer progresses.

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## APPENDIX C. ADDITIONAL RESPONSES

### Additional Comments of Respondents

- 1 Markings can tend to get inflated the longer the system is in use, which is the same complaint from the previous fitrep system. Unless the RS is cognizant of this and makes an effort to keep markings fair and consistent over time, it could hurt the Marines he/she reported on early on in the system's life.
- 2 It is a good tool, but has limits. It should be only one of several tools in decision makers finding the optimum assignment for an individual or choosing whom to advance. No matter what quantifiable changes or additions are made to a fitrep, there will still be some qualitative input (reading between the lines) based on the decision maker's judgment and experience. I would be skeptical of a fitrep that claimed to do that as well.
- 3 My perception is that FITREP grades are not that important unless they are very good or very bad on the relative scale. I think it is more important to have the right assignments (joint tours, serving in the right billets, go to the war, don't go to NPS, etc.). The reviewing officer's ranking is critical which ties into my response in question 18. Also, in many cases the FITREP is so personality dependant (for everyone involved; Marine reported on, reporting senior and reviewing officer) that it is unfortunate. I have gone from near the bottom to the number one Marine ( in the same unit) with a change in reporting senior and reviewing officer. My day-to-day job performance never changed, just the perceived value of it. Final comment: Competence is often over looked in important areas. In a skilled MOS such as a pilot, often a good flyer and aircraft commander is grossly incompetent in his staff work. This is never captured in the fitrep process. Such an officer is what the squadron needs to be mission effective, but he should never be promoted to a department head position. The opposite also occurs. A average or even weak pilot may be an outstanding, insightful staff officer who should be a department head and future leader of the Corps, but he/she may never get promoted. I have seen this many times, but I don't think it is a problem easily solved.
- 4 Gentlemen, it's me, John Barry. Like we talked about in the classroom that day, I think "time" has a lot to do with the utility of this document (and whether or not it becomes inflated)... perhaps there should be a combat fitrep and a garrison fitrep? I am sure some of these competencies would not even show up on a combat fitrep (PME, evaluations, etc)... it may be whittled down to performance, courage, and leadership. Good luck gentlemen!
- 5 The FITREP is trying to be too many things for too many people and as such has become a burden. By its format alone it serves to masters those who make decisions based on numbers and those who make decisions based on a "word picture".
- 6 The fitrep as it is now designed is a much better reflection of an officer's ability than the old version. There is still some inflation, especially in section I, but this is also the more subjective of the sections of the fitrep.



- 7 Over-inflation is still a problem. Most senior enlisted refuse accept the fact that they can not compare fitreps from different RS. What they think is a low mark, may be above the average for an RS.
- 8 I have been forced by senior officers to change marks to reflect the RO comments they wished to make. Because of this my profile is completely wrong. I feel that a better check and balance to avoid this is needed. I understand it was an unlawful order, but that doesn't make it any easier to disobey in certain situations.
- 9 Throughout my career of over 19 years, I have witnessed numerous transformations in the FITREP reporting process. In my opinion, it is still a "numbers game." The risk of inflated reports still plagues our evaluation system. Although new measures exist to hold our Reporting Seniors accountable against inflated reports, these measures are rarely used. The FITREP system is still a very personal way of evaluating our officers and Staff NCO's. Since 1985, this system is still subject to bias reports and evaluations.
- 10 Becoming over inflated again with the word pictures.
- 11 I feel the best thing about the new FITREP is that you can see better how you one FITREP matches up to others written by that same RS or RO. BUT on the other side RS and RO have to ensure that they stay consistent with how they rank officers of the same grade.
- 12 fitrep also provides insight to the evaluator's leadership style and competence. The fitrep itself is a passive documentation. With or without a fitrep, the leader must lead and mentor his subordinates.
- 13 The fitrep can not ferret out poor leadership in the aviation community. While a RS might be able to discern that an aviator is a capable leader in the air, in doing so the RS more often than not ignores said Aviator's ineptness when it comes to leading Marines within the Squadron. This is currently an infection in Marine Aviation and it is being played out in the headlines of Marine Times, as well as in the background.
- 14 They appear to be inflated.
- 15 Fitreps are a good tool that are not utilized the right way. The online submission idea will be a definite step in the right direction.
- 16 If used in the manner as directed by the Marine Corps, it is a good tool for evaluations. It is a bit complex, which can make reporting frustrating, but it is a comprehensive report and is valuable if used properly.
- 17 When the current version of the FITREP came out RS's/RO's were afraid to mark anybody high, but have since gotten over that resulting in many Marines having fitreps that were good at the time they were done, but are now below average for the respective RS/RO due to deflated markings early on when building their profile.
- 18 NA
- 19 The intent for the current system to do away with the inflation of the old system is negated by the RS profile. The word picture descriptors help, but any system of measurement simply creates a standard for inflation by a different name. In fairness, it's not bad to be able to compare people against each other, but there's no reason for the lip service when the system changed that this new system would

- be the end-all, be-all for fairness and objectivity. WRT Question 17, RO's markings and Section I comments are as critical for determining an officer's future potential as the box markings.
- 20 I think it's an effective tool as is for the most part. Instead of focusing on improving the tool, I think we need to place more emphasis on how to use the thing to evaluate Marines and how important it is for your Marines. I think my exposure to the fitrep process at TBS was a one or two hour class. It needs to be one of the elements that receives emphasis at TBS, because it is such an important responsibility for an officer.
- 21 As a general rule, I think using "numerical sorting" according to relative value in order to prescreen reports is not a great concept. Many officers who are in commands for long periods of time or who have a high rate of turnover with their bosses get a lot of "welcome aboard" type fitreps, or compete against themselves. Example...Logisticians will often serve several different billets in a Division battalion in one tour forcing them to compete against themselves doing different jobs. Consolidating promotion at the HQMC level removes the personal knowledge that an officer's superiors have of his skills. How hard would it be to decentralize the promotion system down to the unit or Major subordinate command. In general, I have little faith in a mass promotion board being able to understand the nuances contained in a stack of fitreps for each person. Different people like to use different verbiage and some people interpret verbiage differently (i.e. which is better, to be excellent or outstanding? Know one really knows when comparing thousands of fitreps. And the weighting of PME and Evaluations on the same level as performance in the relative value is stupid.
- 22 It is the best system available but Reporting Seniors bias (recorded via their profile) MUST be factored in for it to work. I suggest the actual fitrep be adjusted using a numerical coefficient before being used for promotion, etc.
- 23 It is still necessary to provide a history of a Marine's performance over time. It's good to see that an evaluator's history is taken into account. separate the Santa Clauses from the Grinches.
- 24 Necessary objective tool to provide equal footing for all Marines.
- 25 Overall, I believe it's a decent tool used to rank and assess Marines. However, I think sometimes they are written with biases and not necessary a reflection of how well a Marine can perform his or her job. I think they are much better now than they used to be, however, and I think what we use in the Marine Corps is much better than what the Navy currently uses.
- 26 I do not think its accurate, but I do think it provides a basis for making promotion decisions.
- 27 I believe the only utility of the fitrep is the section I word picture, and even then it turns into a creative writing exercise.
- 28 The strength of the FITREP, in my opinion, lies in its dual nature...one of the "guided evaluation"...category by category...and the other of the Section I comments...the freestyle expression of the supervisor's impressions (word picture) of the MRO.

29 It seems to me that too much emphasis is placed on the RO's grading of the  
subordinate (the Christmas tree rating). However, in many cases, the RO is  
somewhat unaware of the MRO's performance.

30 I believe the new system has definitely been improved over the previous system is  
a much better tool for basing promotions.

31 The utility of the FITREP is outstanding. There was no problem with the old  
system--it was the human dimension and reporting official inflation that ruined it.  
The relative values and definitions outlined in the current system are designed to  
guess-work out of the equation for reporting officials. Marine evaluation officials  
must be willing to use the fitrep in the spirit in which it was intended--to evaluate  
PAST performance--not in the perceived future promotability.

32 I really like how your profile is maintained. If an officer is doing their job they  
should know their profile and be consistent. If this happens, it is a great way to  
distinguish amongst Marines who may appear on paper to be the same.

33 The fitrep is a very subjective tool to determine if an officer is truly qualified for  
promotion or assignment. But this is a good system, because I can not think of a  
better method.

34 Know yourself: The fitrep is a valuable tool in the hands of leaders who take the  
time to brief their own expectation (or even have explicit expectation) upon which  
to reference. Statistics: For the many that have no idea of how the statistical  
metrics work out for rating Marines, their ignorance and lack of attention to detail  
hurts the MRO.

35 I feel that overall it is a necessary tool for evaluating Marines, and it sounds like  
the Marine Corps has a good system for tracking RS and RO trends over time, in  
order to account for different standards and methods of evaluation. I feel that the  
billet in which a Marine served should be weighted to account for the fact that  
some operating forces billets are more demanding than others (i.e. staff job on the  
MEU versus assignment to a base or station).

36 I do not believe FitReps provide any means for effecting future assignments  
(perception is reality).

37 The Fitrep appears to be the best that it can be in evaluating a group of officers for  
promotion. The problem that is inherent in the system is the personal aspect which  
I do not think can be changed easily. Evaluations are skewed by the individual  
writing them. While the system tries to correct for this, it cannot correct for such  
factors as knowledge, and thoroughness on the part of the evaluator.

38 NA

39 Much better than the previous system. Needs to be automated like the awards  
system.

40 More often than not the RO does not have good visibility to give a fair assessment  
of the MRO. By default they trust the evaluation of the RS and just concur with  
the report. I have often heard that the RS RO profiles are not used to the fullest  
during boards, which I thought was the whole reason for the new format.

41 EVEN WITH THE CHANGES, THERE IS MUCH POTENTIAL FOR  
INFLATED MARKS

- 42 I believe our current evaluation process is excellent. I have written and signed many (approx 300) under both the old and new systems. The new system is better, especially if the fitrep uses his evaluation of others history in writing each fitrep. The only change I believe is necessary is that the RS should be the one who fills out the Christmas tree, or include the Christmas tree at all levels.
- 43 We do not live in a perfect world. The FITREP is not perfect. Further emphasis needs to be placed on the FITREP during TBS. An Officer should get it right from the get go, and should not waiver his/her standards for the rest of their career.
- 44 RO took the leverage away from the RS in new system
- 45 Your career boils down to relative value marks. No one looks at all the other grading or billet description crap. I'm sure they bore site on the section C and RV. I doubt anyone looks at items 3-17 unless the scores are in the gutter.
- 46 The current "less" inflated system is far better than the "old" system of the 90's. We must continue to push to prevent inflated reports, that in the end hurt the "Average" Marine that is the bedrock of the Corps' productivity.
- 47 I definitely think they should put the relative ranking against peers back into the fitrep i.e.: 1 of 4 etc. It was great and I can't believe they dropped it. It was one of the only good things about the old fitrep and is a real truth-teller.
- 48 I believe some occupational fields are seen as more valuable than others (i.e., my field, admin, is not seen as a value-added occupation). Those holding the "valuable" MOS tend to get a better fitness report or at the very least one that gets a CO's personal touch (i.e., a full paragraph in the Reviewing Officer's comments vice a one liner). I have never had a boss sit me down and go over my billet responsibilities, and rarely if ever am I counseled on my progress during a reporting period. More often than not, when I am handed my completed fitness report—not briefed on it mind you—that is the first indication that I either have or have not lived up to my reporting seniors expectations. People often forget that a fitrep is an evaluation tool not a counseling tool. I have basically written every fitness report (except the graded section) that I have ever received (including section I). I often feel like subordinates should be able to rank their seniors on the "Setting the Example" block...
- 49 The FITREP is an excellent way to gauge performance as long as its employed properly and that Marine's RS and RO refrain from employing verbosity or exaggeration to compensate for lack of performance. Accurate and timely reporting does the Marine Corps as a whole a huge favor by focusing on maintaining quality rather than just quantity.
- 50 Perhaps studying the merits of having a separate officer and enlisted fitrep may be useful. From time-to-time, I believe that officers and enlisted are or should be evaluated on different things. This is definitely debatable as I could offer a counter-argument to this in the form that all Marine leaders (officer & enlisted) should espouse certain leadership qualities that are standard regardless of rank or position. Nevertheless, I believe this is a debatable issue and may be useful to study if not already done so.
- 51 Please simplify to fitrep to 1 page and an electronic form via MOL would ensure MRO would receive their fitrep. A big problem is RSs may not do the MRO-RS

- relationship in a timely matter, and MROs may not receive their copy of their fitrep from the RS.
- 52 As described in #19 one may be marked lower or certain areas since they may not have the opportunity to do so in their assigned billet. i.e. it is possible to be a staff officer with no one immediately under your charge (an S-2 Officer with no S-2 Marines). In these cases a mark of Not Observed should be encouraged and explained and not be seen as a blemish and an automatic adverse report. Instead I think the tendency is to just put a lower mark so that remarks don't need to be justified.
- 53 It is nice that the FITREP gives the commander's ranking of the individual officers in a unit but there should also be a strictly numerical ranking done by the peers to help identify who the real team players, leaders and workers are in the unit. This might help identify the individuals that do a lot of the work but don't necessarily "blow their own horn"...the more selfless members.
- 54 The fitrep is as good as the profile of the RS. The mechanics and importance of starting a good profile must be ingrained in new 2nd lts while at TBS and when they first hit the fleet. Skewing their profile one way or the other while they are junior could have significant impacts on their Marines years down the road.
- 55 Narrative evaluations may provide more accurate feedback to the performance of a Marine. An arbitrary number, selected from a range, limits the information that can be gleaned from the evaluation.
- 56 The new FITREP is a significant improvement over the old one. The old FITREP was over inflated because individuals screwed up their way to the left. In the new system, individuals earn their way to the right.
- 57 Aviation Marines are graded mostly according to how well they perform a ground job rather than on how well they fly or lead. For example, the squadron's S-4 officer's fitrep is mostly based on his logistics skills for which he has never been to school or formally trained rather than on his ability to fly his aircraft or his flight leadership. That's a glaring discrepancy that weighs heavily on me.

## APPENDIX D. EXAMPLE OF USMC FITREP

### USMC FITNESS REPORT (AFTER 1999)

USMC FITNESS REPORT (1610)  
NAVMC 10835A (Rev. 1-99 (EF))  
PREVIOUS EDITIONS WILL NOT BE USED  
SN: 0109-LF-069-0600

**DO NOT STAPLE  
THIS FORM**

#### COMMANDANT'S GUIDANCE

The completed fitness report is the most important information component in manpower management. It is the primary means of evaluating a Marine's performance and is the Commandant's primary tool for the selection of personnel for promotion, augmentation, resident schooling, command, and duty assignments. Therefore, the completion of this report is one of an officer's most critical responsibilities. Inherent in this duty is the commitment of each Reporting Senior and Reviewing Officer to ensure the integrity of the system by giving close attention to accurate marking and timely reporting. Every officer serves a role in the scrupulous maintenance of this evaluation system, ultimately important to both the individual and the Marine Corps. Inflationary markings only serve to dilute the actual value of each report. Reviewing Officers will not concur with inflated reports.

#### A. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

1. Marine Reported On:							
a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN	e. Grade	f. DOR	g. PMOS	h. BILMOS
2. Organization:							
a. MCC	b. RUC	c. Unit Description					
3. Occasion and Period Covered:				4. Duty Assignment (descriptive title):			
a. OCC	b. From	To	c. Type				
5. Special			6. Marine Subject Of:			7. Recommended For Promotion:	
a. Adverse	b. Not Observed	c. Extended	a. Commendatory Material	b. Derogatory Material	c. Disciplinary Action	a. Yes	b. No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Special Information:			9. Duty Preferences:				
a. QUAL	d. HT(in.)	g. Reserve Component	a. Code b. Descriptive Title				
b. PFT	e. WT	h. Future Use	1st				
c. Status	f. Body Fat	i. Future Use	2nd				
			3rd				
10. Reporting Senior:							
a. Last Name	b. Init	c. Service	d. SSN	e. Grade	f. Duty Assignment		
11. Reviewing Officer:							
a. Last Name	b. Init	c. Service	d. SSN	e. Grade	f. Duty Assignment		

#### B. BILLET DESCRIPTION

#### C. BILLET ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Marine Reported On:

a. Last Name

b. First Name

c. MI

d. SSN

2. Occasion and Period Covered:

a. OCC

b. From

To

**D. MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT**

**1. PERFORMANCE.** Results achieved during the reporting period. How well those duties inherent to a Marine's billet, plus all additional duties, formally and informally assigned, were carried out. Reflects a Marine's aptitude, competence, and commitment to the unit's success above personal reward. Indicators are time and resource management, task prioritization, and tenacity to achieve positive ends consistently.

ADV	Meets requirements of billet and additional duties. Aptitude, commitment, and competence meet expectations. Results maintain status quo.	Consistently produces quality results while measurably improving unit performance. Habitually makes effective use of time and resources; improves billet procedures and products. Positive impact extends beyond billet expectations.	Results far surpass expectations. Recognizes and exploits new resources; creates opportunities. Emulated; sought after as an expert with influence beyond unit. Impact significant; innovative approaches to problems produce significant gains in quality and	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**2. PROFICIENCY.** Demonstrates technical knowledge and practical skill in the execution of the Marine's overall duties. Combines training, education and experience. Translates skills into actions which contribute to accomplishing tasks and missions. Imparts knowledge to others. Grade dependent.

ADV	Competent. Possesses the requisite range of skills and knowledge commensurate with grade and experience. Understands and articulates basic functions related to mission.	Demonstrates mastery of all required skills. Expertise, education and experience consistently enhance mission accomplishment. Innovative troubleshooter and problem solver. Effectively imparts skills to subordinates.	True expert in field. Knowledge and skills impact far beyond those of peers. Translates broad-based education and experience into forward thinking, innovative actions. Makes immeasurable impact on mission accomplishment. Peerless teacher, selflessly imparts expertise to subordinates, peers, and	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

JUSTIFICATION:

**E. INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER**

**1. COURAGE.** Moral or physical strength to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Personal acceptance of responsibility and accountability, placing conscience over competing interests regardless of consequences. Conscious, overriding decision to risk bodily harm or death to accomplish the mission or save others. The will to persevere despite uncertainty.

ADV	Demonstrates inner strength and acceptance of responsibility commensurate with scope of duties and experience. Willing to face moral or physical challenges in pursuit of mission accomplishment.	Guided by conscience in all actions. Proven ability to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Exhibits bravery in the face of adversity and uncertainty. Not deterred by morally difficult situations or hazardous responsibilities.	Uncommon bravery and capacity to overcome obstacles and inspire others in the face of moral dilemma or life-threatening danger. Demonstrated under the most adverse conditions. Selfless. Always places conscience over competing interests regardless of physical or personal consequences.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**2. EFFECTIVENESS UNDER STRESS.** Thinking, functioning and leading effectively under conditions of physical and/or mental pressure. Maintaining composure appropriate for the situation, while displaying steady purpose of action, enabling one to inspire others while continuing to lead under adverse conditions. Physical and emotional strength, resilience and endurance are elements.

ADV	Exhibits discipline and stability under pressure. Judgment and effective problem-solving skills are evident.	Consistently demonstrates maturity, mental agility, and willpower during periods of adversity. Provides order to chaos through the application of intuition, problem-solving skills, and leadership. Composure reassures others.	Demonstrates seldom-matched presence of mind under the most demanding circumstances. Stabilizes any situation through the resolute and timely application of direction, focus and personal presence.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**3. INITIATIVE.** Action in the absence of specific direction. Seeing what needs to be done and acting without prompting. The instinct to begin a task and follow through energetically on one's own accord. Being creative, proactive and decisive. Transforming opportunity into action.

ADV	Demonstrates willingness to take action in the absence of specific direction. Acts commensurate with grade, training and experience.	Self-motivated and action-oriented. Foresight and energy consistently transform opportunity into action. Develops and pursues creative, innovative solutions. Acts without prompting. Self-starter.	Highly motivated and proactive. Displays exceptional awareness of surroundings and environment. Uncanny ability to anticipate mission requirements and quickly formulate original, far-reaching solutions. Always takes decisive, effective action.	N/O			
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

JUSTIFICATION:

1. Marine Reported On:

a. Last Name

b. First Name

c. MI

d. SSN

2. Occasion and Period Covered:

a. OCC

b. From

To

**F. LEADERSHIP**

**1. LEADING SUBORDINATES.** The inseparable relationship between leader and led. The application of leadership principles to provide direction and motivate subordinates. Using authority, persuasion, and personality to influence subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Sustaining motivation and morale while maximizing subordinates' performance.

ADV	Engaged; provides instructions and directs execution. Seeks to accomplish mission in ways that sustain motivation and morale. Actions contribute to unit effectiveness.	Achieves a highly effective balance between direction and delegation. Effectively tasks subordinates and clearly delineates standards expected. Enhances performance through constructive supervision. Fosters motivation and enhances morale. Builds and sustains teams that successfully meet mission requirements. Encourages initiative and candor among subordinates.	Promotes creativity and energy among subordinates by striking the ideal balance of direction and delegation. Achieves highest levels of performance from subordinates by encouraging individual initiative. Engenders willing subordination, loyalty, and trust that allow subordinates to overcome their perceived limitations. Personal leadership fosters highest levels of motivation and morale, ensuring mission accomplishment even in the most difficult circumstances.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

**2. DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES.** Commitment to train, educate, and challenge all Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates. Developing team players and esprit de corps. Ability to combine teaching and coaching. Creating an atmosphere tolerant of mistakes in the course of learning.

ADV	Maintains an environment that allows personal and professional development. Ensures subordinates participate in all mandated development programs.	Develops and institutes innovative programs, to include PME, that emphasize personal and professional development of subordinates. Challenges subordinates to exceed their perceived potential thereby enhancing unit morale and effectiveness. Creates an environment where all Marines are confident to learn through trial and error. As a mentor, prepares subordinates for increased responsibilities and duties.	Widely recognized and emulated as a teacher, coach and leader. Any Marine would desire to serve with this Marine because they know they will grow personally and professionally. Subordinate and unit performance far surpassed expected results due to MRO's mentorship and team building talents. Attitude toward subordinate development is infectious, extending beyond the unit.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

**3. SETTING THE EXAMPLE.** The most visible facet of leadership: how well a Marine serves as a role model for all others. Personal action demonstrates the highest standards of conduct, ethical behavior, fitness, and appearance. Bearing, demeanor, and self-discipline are elements.

ADV	Maintains Marine Corps standards for appearance, weight, and uniform wear. Sustains required level of physical fitness. Adheres to the tenets of the Marine Corps core values.	Personal conduct on and off duty reflects highest Marine Corps standards of integrity, bearing and appearance. Character is exceptional. Actively seeks self-improvement in wide-ranging areas. Dedication to duty and professional example encourage others.	Model Marine, frequently emulated. Exemplary conduct, behavior, and actions are tone-setting. An inspiration to subordinates, peers, and seniors. Remarkable dedication to improving self and others.	N
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

**4. ENSURING WELL-BEING OF SUBORDINATES.** Genuine interest in the well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on unit mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care of their own.

ADV	Deals confidently with issues pertinent to subordinate welfare and recognizes suitable courses of action that support subordinates' well-being. Applies available resources, allowing subordinates to effectively concentrate on the mission.	Instills and/or reinforces a sense of responsibility among junior Marines for themselves and their subordinates. Actively fosters the development of and uses support systems for subordinates which improve their ability to contribute to unit mission accomplishment. Efforts to enhance subordinate welfare improve the unit's ability to accomplish its mission.	Noticeably enhances subordinates' well-being, resulting in a measurable increase in unit effectiveness. Maximizes unit and base resources to provide subordinates with the best support available. Proactive approach serves to energize unit members to "take care of their own," thereby correcting potential problems before they can hinder subordinates' effectiveness. Widely recognized for techniques and policies that produce results and build morale. Builds strong family atmosphere. Puts motto <i>Mission first, Marines always</i> , into action.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

**5. COMMUNICATION SKILLS.** The efficient transmission and receipt of thoughts and ideas that enable and enhance leadership. Equal importance given to listening, speaking, writing, and critical reading skills. Interactive, allowing one to perceive problems and situations, provide concise guidance, and express complex ideas in a form easily understood by everyone. Allows subordinates to ask questions, raise issues and concerns and venture opinions. Contributes to a leader's ability to motivate as well as counsel.

ADV	Skilled in receiving and conveying information. Communicates effectively in performance of duties.	Clearly articulates thoughts and ideas, verbally and in writing. Communication in all forms is accurate, intelligible, concise, and timely. Communicates with clarity and verve, ensuring understanding of intent or purpose. Encourages and considers the contributions of others.	Highly developed facility in verbal communication. Adept in composing written documents of the highest quality. Combines presence and verbal skills which engender confidence and achieve understanding irrespective of the setting, situation, or size of the group addressed. Displays an intuitive sense of when and how to listen.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

**JUSTIFICATION:**



1. Marine Reported On:

a. Last Name

b. First Name

c. MI

d. SSN

2. Occasion and Period Covered:

a. OCC

b. From

To

**G. INTELLECT AND WISDOM**

1. **PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME).** Commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Marine Corps. Increases the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude. Resources include resident schools; professional qualifications and certification processes; nonresident and other extension courses; civilian educational institution coursework; a personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Commandant's Reading List; participation in discussion groups and military societies; and involvement in learning through new technologies.

ADV	Maintains currency in required military skills and related developments. Has completed or is enrolled in appropriate level of PME for grade and level of experience. Recognizes and understands new and creative approaches to service issues. Remains abreast of contemporary concepts and issues.	PME outlook extends beyond MOS and required education. Develops and follows a comprehensive personal program which includes broadened professional reading and/or academic course work; advances new concepts and ideas.	Dedicated to life-long learning. As a result of active and continuous efforts, widely recognized as an intellectual leader in professionally related topics. Makes time for study and takes advantage of all resources and programs. Introduces new and creative approaches to services issues. Engages in a broad spectrum of forums and dialogues.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

2. **DECISION MAKING ABILITY.** Viable and timely problem solution. Contributing elements are judgment and decisiveness. Decisions reflect the balance between an optimal solution and a satisfactory, workable solution that generates tempo. Decisions are made within the context of the commander's established intent and the goal of mission accomplishment. Anticipation, mental agility, intuition, and success are inherent.

ADV	Makes sound decisions leading to mission accomplishment. Actively collects and evaluates information and weighs alternatives to achieve timely results. Confidently approaches problems; accepts responsibility for outcomes.	Demonstrates mental agility; effectively prioritizes and solves multiple complex problems. Analytical abilities enhanced by experience, education, and intuition. Anticipates problems and implements viable, long-term solutions. Steadfast, willing to make difficult decisions.	Complex problems. Seldom matched analytical a	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

3. **JUDGMENT.** The discretionary aspect of decision making. Draws on core values, knowledge, and personal experience to make wise choices. Comprehends the consequences of contemplated courses of action.

ADV	Majority of judgments are measured, circumspect, relevant, and correct.	Decisions are consistent and uniformly correct, tempered by consideration of their consequences. Able to identify, isolate and assess relevant factors in the decision making process. Opinions sought by others. Subordinates personal interests in favor of impartiality.	Decisions reflect exceptional insight and wisdom beyond this Marine's experience. Counsel sought by all; often an arbiter. Consistent, superior judgment inspires the confidence of seniors.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

JUSTIFICATION:

**H. FULFILLMENT OF EVALUATION RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. **EVALUATIONS.** The extent to which this officer serving as a reporting official conducted, or required others to conduct, accurate, uninflated, and timely evaluations.

ADV	Occasionally submitted untimely or administratively incorrect evaluations. As RS, submitted one or more reports that contained inflated markings. As RO, concurred with one or more reports from subordinates that were returned by HQMC for inflated marking.	Prepared uninflated evaluations which were consistently submitted on time. Evaluations accurately described performance and character. Evaluations contained no inflated markings. No reports returned by RO or HQMC for inflated marking. No subordinates' reports returned by HQMC for inflated marking. Few, if any, reports were returned by RO or HQMC for administrative errors. Section Cs were void of superlatives. Justifications were specific, verifiable, substantive, and where possible, quantifiable and supported the markings	No reports submitted late. No reports returned by either RO or HQMC for administrative correction or inflated markings. No subordinates' reports returned by HQMC for administrative correction or inflated markings. Returned procedurally or administratively incorrect reports to subordinates for correction. As RO nonconcurred with all inflated reports.	N/O
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A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☐

JUSTIFICATION:

1. Marine Reported On		2. Occasion and Period Covered	
a. Last Name	b. First Name	c. MI	d. SSN
		a. OCC	b. From To

**I. DIRECTED AND ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**J. CERTIFICATION**  

1. I CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and without prejudice or partiality and that I have provided a signed copy of this report to the Marine Reported on. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature of Reporting Senior) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

2. I ACKNOWLEDGE the adverse nature of this report and  
☐ I have no statement to make \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)  
☐ I have attached a statement \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

**K. REVIEWING OFFICER COMMENTS**  

1. OBSERVATION: <input type="checkbox"/> Sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient	2. EVALUATION: <input type="checkbox"/> Concur <input type="checkbox"/> Do Not Concur
---	---

<b>3. COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT:</b> Provide a comparative assessment of potential by placing an "X" in the appropriate box. In marking the comparison, consider all Marines of this grade whose professional abilities are known to you personally.	<b>DESCRIPTION</b> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">THE EMINENTLY QUALIFIED MARINE <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">ONE OF THE FEW EXCEPTIONALLY QUALIFIED MARINES <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">ONE OF THE MANY HIGHLY QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS WHO FORM THE MAJORITY OF THIS GRADE <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">A QUALIFIED MARINE <input type="checkbox"/></div> <div style="margin-bottom: 5px;">UNSATISFACTORY <input type="checkbox"/></div>	<b>COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT</b> 
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4. REVIEWING OFFICER COMMENTS: Amplify your comparative assessment mark; evaluate potential for continued professional development to include: promotion, command, assignment, resident PME, and retention; and put Reporting Senior marks and comments in perspective.

5. I CERTIFY that to the best of my knowledge and belief all entries made hereon are true and without prejudice or partiality. \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature of Reviewing Officer) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

6. I ACKNOWLEDGE the adverse nature of this report and  
☐ I have no statement to make \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)  
☐ I have attached a statement \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date in YYYYMMDD format)

**L. ADDENDUM PAGE**  

ADDENDUM PAGE ATTACHED: YES

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**APPENDIX E. WEB-BASED USMC SURVEY**

**WEB-BASED USMC SURVEY**



# Marines

*The Few. The Proud.*

## USMC FITREP Evaluation

1 What is your rank?

2 What is your Primary Marine Occupational Specialty (PMOS)?

The following questions require you to weight the following FITREP competencies based upon their impact on success in your PMOS.

3 PERFORMANCE.

Results achieved during the reporting period. How well those duties are inherent to a Marine's billet, plus all additional duties, formally and informally assigned, were carried out. Reflects a Marine's aptitude, competence, and commitment to the unit's success above personal reward. Indicators are time and resource management, task prioritization, and tenacity to achieve positive ends consistently.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

4 PROFICIENCY.

Demonstrates technical knowledge and practical skill in the execution of the Marine's overall duties. Combines training, education and experience. Translates skills into actions which contribute to accomplishing tasks and missions. Imparts knowledge to others. Grade dependent.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 5 COURAGE.

Moral or physical strength to overcome danger, fear, difficulty or anxiety. Personal acceptance of responsibility and accountability, placing conscience over competing interests regardless of consequences. Conscious, overriding decision to risk bodily harm or death to accomplish the mission or save others. The will to persevere despite uncertainty.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 6 EFFECTIVENESS UNDER STRESS.

Thinking, functioning, and leading effectively under conditions of physical and/or mental pressure. Maintaining composure appropriate for the situation, while displaying steady purpose of action, enabling one to inspire others while continuing to lead under adverse conditions. Physical and emotional strength, resilience, and endurance are elements.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 7 INITIATIVE.

Action in the absence of specific direction. Seeing what needs to be done and acting without prompting. The instinct to begin a task and follow through energetically on one's own accord. Being creative, proactive and decisive. Transforming opportunity into action.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 8 LEADING SUBORDINATES.

The inseparable relationship between leader and led. The application of leadership principles to provide direction and motivate subordinates. Using authority, persuasion, and personality to influence subordinates to accomplish assigned tasks. Sustaining motivation and morale while maximizing subordinates' performance.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 9 DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES.

Commitment to train, educate, and challenge all Marines regardless of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender. Mentorship. Cultivating professional and personal development of subordinates. Developing team players and esprit de corps. Ability to combine teaching and coaching. Creating an atmosphere tolerant of mistakes in the course of learning.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 10 SETTING THE EXAMPLE.

The most visible facet of leadership: how well a Marine serves as a role model for all others. Personal action demonstrates the highest standards of conduct, ethical behavior, fitness, and appearance. Bearing, demeanor, and self-discipline are elements.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 11 ENSURING THE WELL-BEING OF SUBORDINATES.

Genuine interest in the well-being of Marines. Efforts enhance subordinates' ability to concentrate/focus on unit mission accomplishment. Concern for family readiness is inherent. The importance placed on welfare of subordinates is based on the belief that Marines take care of their own.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

## 12 COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS.

The efficient transmission and receipt of thoughts and ideas that enable and enhance leadership. Equal importance given to listening, speaking, writing, and critical reading skills. Interactive, allowing one to perceive problems and situations, provide concise guidance, and express complex ideas in a form easily understood by everyone. Allows subordinates to ask questions, raise issues, and concerns and venture opinions. Contributes to a leader's ability to motivate as well as counsel.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

### 13 PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION (PME).

Commitment to intellectual growth in ways beneficial to the Marine Corps. Increases the breadth and depth of warfighting and leadership aptitude. Resources include resident schools; professional qualifications and certification processes; nonresident and other extension courses; civilian educational institution coursework; a personal reading program that includes (but is not limited to) selections from the Commandant's Reading List; participating in discussion groups and military societies; and involvement in learning through new technologies.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

### 14 DECISION MAKING ABILITY.

Viable and timely problem solution. Contributing elements are judgment and decisiveness. Decisions reflect the balance between an optimal solution and a satisfactory, workable solution that generates tempo. Decisions are made within the context of the commander's established intent and the goal of mission accomplishment. Anticipation, mental agility, intuition, and success are inherent.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

### 15 JUDGMENT.

The discretionary aspect of decision making. Draws on core values, knowledge, and personal experience to make wise choices. Comprehends the consequences of contemplated courses of action.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6



16 EVALUATIONS.

The extent to which this officer serving as a reporting official conducted, or required others to conduct, accurate, uninflated, and timely evaluations.

Unnecessary for success	Sometimes relevant for success	Relevant for success	Important for success	Highly important for success	Critical for success
1	2	3	4	5	6

17 Summarize your overall evaluation of the FITREP as an assignment/promotion tool using a 1-6 scale where (6) is "outstanding" and (1) means "poor." Please select one rating.

Poor	Below average	Average	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
1	2	3	4	5	6

18 In your opinion, do you believe that some assignments and/or promotions are influenced by some form of favoritism such as nepotism or the "old boys network"? If yes, please explain why you think this occurs.

YES NO

Additional Comment

19 Do you believe that USMC officer's skills are required to change as they progress through the ranks? If yes, please explain why.

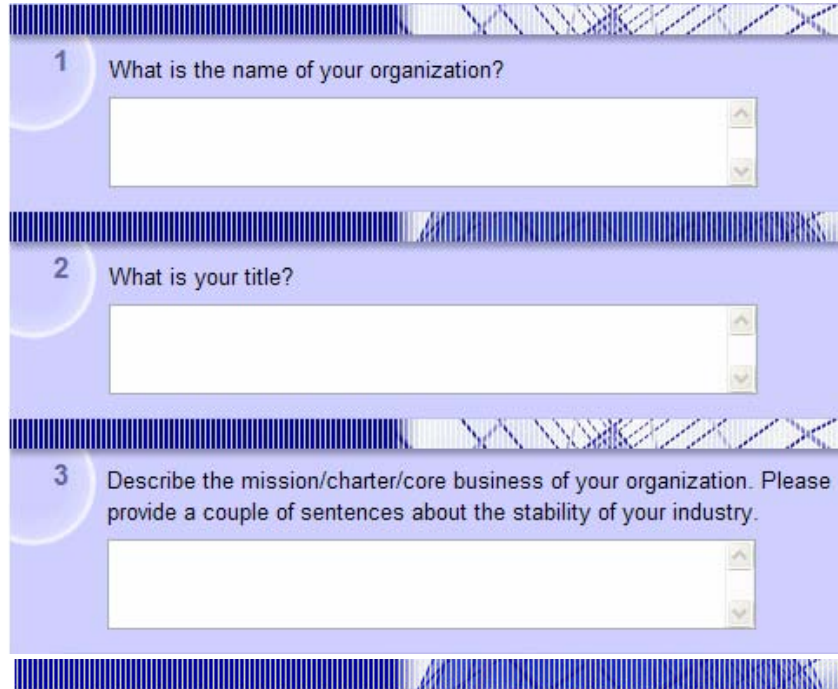
YES NO

Additional Comment

20 Please provide any additional comments you may have about the utility of the FITREP:

## APPENDIX F. WEB-BASED HRM SURVEY

### WEB- BASED HRM SURVEY



The image shows a screenshot of a web-based HRM survey form. The form has a light blue background and is divided into three sections by horizontal lines with a blue and white striped pattern. Each section contains a question number in a blue circle, the question text, and a text input field with a small 'v' icon on the right side.

- 1 What is the name of your organization?
- 2 What is your title?
- 3 Describe the mission/charter/core business of your organization. Please provide a couple of sentences about the stability of your industry.

4

Which of the following staff promotion/selection practices does your organization use? Check all that apply.

- ☐ One-on-one interviews
- ☐ Group-panel interviews
- ☐ Educational qualifications
- ☐ Application form
- ☐ Employer references
- ☐ Life history
- ☐ Questionnaire
- ☐ Personality questionnaire
- ☐ Simulation exercise
- ☐ Graphology
- ☐ Medical Screen
- ☐ Peers as interviewers
- ☐ Organizational tests
- ☐ Assessment centers
- ☐ Other, Please Specify

Reference for question 4: Roe, R. & van der Berg, P. (2003). Selection in Europe: Context, Developments and Research Agenda. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 12 (3), 257-287.

5 Are your tests/practices tailored differently to different departments?

YES

NO

6 If yes, please explain why.

7 Do you believe that staff promotion/selection practices should be tailored to suit the specific requirements for different jobs?

YES

NO

8 If yes, please explain why.

9 How often do you redefine your staff promotion/selection criteria in accordance with changing external environments?

10 Do you believe that a well-rounded 'broad person-oriented' leader is more successful in interpreting the external environment than a 'focused competence-oriented' leader?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Sometimes

11 If 'Sometimes', please explain why.

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12 Are internally promoted personnel generally better leaders in your organization?

Additional Comment

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13 What percentage of your senior executives are internally promoted?

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14 Do you have a periodical performance appraisal report for all staff?

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15 If yes, please identify and rank the assessed competencies, and how often they are assessed.

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16 Do you believe that job descriptions and organizational design factors/structure are relatively stable?

17 If no, please explain why.

18 How do you measure the effectiveness of your promotion/selection systems?

19 From your experience, what percentage of a worker's motivation is derived from getting the job of their preference?

20 How important is working in teams to the success of your organization?

- ☐ Not important
- ☐ Sometimes important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Critical
- ☐ Other, Please Specify

21 Do you believe that organizations sometimes emphasize individual achievement in lieu of teamwork in the successful attainment of organizational goals?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Sometimes

22 Please add any comments pertaining to any of the above questions.

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